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ABSTRACT

Native people always wear feathers or headdresses; they frequently brandish tomahawks; they live in tipis; the women usually have babies on their backs; the men are fierce and violent; they lurk behind trees; they spend much time dancing on one leg; and their existence is dependent on the proximity of cowboys. They are not men, women and children, but "braves", "squaws", and "papooses". Despite the fact that they have no relation at all to many Native Peoples, these stereotypes commonly appear in children's books to distinguish Native Americans from other people. With distorted, unreal images they degrade Native People and cultures and reinforce and perpetuate racism. This study of some 70 picture books for children ten and under gives specific examples of prevalent stereotypes and how they are reflected in both illustrations and text. The harm of such distortions is discussed and guidelines are listed for illustrators and editors to use in avoiding stereotypes. Some of the classroom activities suggested include role play showing how the Indians repeatedly gave up their land to settlers, and discussions conducted on the wisdom and harmony with nature which underlies many Native American customs. The book concludes with a list of classroom "don'ts" and a section on how stereotypes may be unlearned. (Author/DS)

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Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes

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Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes

A TEACHING UNIT FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS AND CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS

Contains:

* **A study of stereotyping in popular picture books**
* **Filmstrip script and discussion pointers**
* **Ten classroom "don'ts" for teachers**
* **Guidelines for publishers, illustrators and writers**
* **Sensitizing students to stereotypes**
* **Role-playing strategies**
* **Native American perspective on Thanksgiving, Columbus Day and Washington's Birthday**

PUBLISHED BY THE RACISM AND SEXISM RESOURCE CENTER FOR EDUCATORS

A DIVISION OF THE COUNCIL ON INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

We appreciate the cooperation of the Donnell branch of the New York Public Library in allowing photography for the filmstrip in their Children's Room.

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A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this book and filmstrip will be contributed to the *We Will Remember Survival School* on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

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The above illustration of a scalp-hungry "Indian" from *How the West Got Its Name,* by John R. Koch, is the type that fosters stereotypic thinking in young children.

Feathers, Tomahawks and Tipis: A Study of Stereotyped "Indian" Imagery in Children's Picture Books

By Robert B. Moore and Arlene Hirschfelder

The following article will attempt to demonstrate how all of the **items** below are interrelated to one another—and to children's books.

Item: *Mineola, N.Y. 1976*

In a Long Island courtroom a Blackfeet woman is being cross-examined. The white prosecutor says, "And when you lived here you lived in a whiteman's style domicile or residence, didn't you?" She answers, "I don't know what you mean by that question." He continues, "Well, did you live in a tipi, or did you live in a built house that whitemen live in?"

Item: *Ridgewood, New Jersey, 1976*

A man in a business suit quietly enters the rear of an elementary classroom as the teacher tells the class that a Native American visitor will speak to them that day. Almost in unison, the children put their hands to their mouths and start whooping "like Indians." When the embarrassed teacher introduces the visitor, the children stare in disbelief. "But you don't look like an Indian," and "You're not dressed like an Indian," they say.

Item: *St. Louis, Mo. 1976*

A white family is telling their five-year-old son about his adopted one-year-old sister's Native American heritage. She is a Winnebago and they tell him about her people and culture. Suddenly he interrupts and nervously asks if his baby sister "will kill us when she grows up?"

Item: *Onchiota, New York, 1971*

John Fadden (Mohawk) works at the Six Nations (Iroquois) Indian Museum. He reports that time and time again children "refuse to come onto the grounds of the museum because of an intense fear of possibly meeting an Indian. Some actually cry and scream."

Item: *Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1971*

Third and fourth graders write their impressions of Native Americans (spelling is original).

> Indians use to fight cowboys. Sometimes they fight with war paint on . . . Indians live in Teepees.
>
> A hundred years ago they were bad, know there are some nice ones. They heurt lot of people in the world. Thousands of people were kild. They are different then us. Because they are a diffrent color than us. The indians didn't know about Amiraca.
>
> Some have red skin They fot in wars . . . They were dirty rotton pigs thats what.
>
> Indians would be like us if they wern't dark and they talk different. sometimes there like savages.
>
> I think they are killers to americans. Indians wear war paint. Indians make war with americans.

Item: *New York, N.Y., 1974*

First graders describe the pictures of "Indians" they had drawn:

> It's an ugly Indian and he has a bow and arrow and the things he throws. He's a bad Indian and an ugly one. And he kills. He's a really bad Indian and he's a chief and he commands all of them. He throws really far and he kills.
>
> If an Indian moved to the city he'd kill people. He's not smart and would think people were cowboys and would kill dogs because he would think they were buffalo or fish.
>
> [A girl said she had seen Indians close-up when they surrounded a train she was on.] I saw Indians take off the girls' dresses and it scared me. It was something I saw outside the window of the train. There was a chief and the cowboys shot him. I was safe inside the train. The Indians were all around.

Item: *Washington, D.C. 1975*

U.S. Bureau of the Census reports that Native Americans have the lowest income, life expectancy, and standards of housing and health, and highest levels of infant mortality, T.B. and suicide of any racial group in the U.S.

Background of the Study

Anti-Native American attitudes and stereotypes are pervasive throughout U.S. society. The 1969 report of the U.S. Senate Special Sub-Committee on Indian Education states:

> [The U.S. is a] nation that is massively uninformed and misinformed about the American Indian, and his [sic] past and present. Prejudice, racial intolerance, and discrimination towards Indians [are] far more widespread and serious than generally recognized.[1]

Over the centuries of EuroAmerican interaction with Native peoples, an enormous amount of myth, fiction, and stereotyping has developed within white society about "Indians." This pervasive, white-created image of "Indians" has generated much continuing interest, but neither the image nor the interest bear relationship to the reality of Native peoples. Alvin Josephy notes that:

> . . . from the time of the Europeans' first meeting with the Indians in 1492 until today, the Indian has been a familiar but little known—and, indeed, often an unreal—person to the non-Indian. What has been known about him [sic], moreover, frequently has been superficial, distorted, or false.[2]

Michael Dorris (Modoc) writes of a key negative generalization—called "Indian"—made by Europeans:

> With this generalization a new, artificial and completely invalid ethnic group emerged upon the world scene, the product of a myopic European imagination: The INDIAN was born.[3]

Generalized reference to "the American Indian" or to "Indian culture" obliterates the enormous diversity of ceremonies, world views, political and social organization, lifestyles, language, and art among the Chickahominy, Navajo, Menominee, Ojibway, Mohawk, Choctaw, Osage, Ute, Hopi and other Native peoples, both in the past as well as today.

An additional problem is the frequent portrayal of particular Native cultures as static and unchanging. Jack Forbes (Powhatan) writes:

> . . . it is technically incorrect to speak of "Navaho culture," "Quechan culture," or "Sioux culture" without a reference to a particular time period unless it is fully understood that one is speaking about a fluid, changing "tradition" which has only one basic, unifying element, that is, that it is associated with a particular people. "Navaho culture" before 1000 was very different from that of 1700, which in turn was different from 1890, which in turn was different from 1960.[4]

Many food products feature labels with "Indian" stereotypes.

A prime example of how the white-created "Indian" image subverts the diversity of Native cultures is the amalgamation by whites of particular aspects of the cultures of the Lakota (Sioux), Crow, Cheyenne and other nations of the Great Plains area (flowing-feathered headdress, tipis,* "war-dances," buffalo hunting) into a standard motif for the white-created "Indian." This process can be attributed to a variety of factors—the popular paintings of George Catlin in the mid-1800's; the determined resistance of Native nations in the Great Plains to the U.S. invasion in the latter 1800's; the sensationalized press accounts of those wars; and the enormous popularity of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. While these factors helped to create the white image of "Indians," it was left to Hollywood to concretize it and distribute it throughout the world.

Ralph and Natasha Friar, in *The Only Good Indian: The Hollywood Gospel,* analyze hundreds of the "several thousand" films about "Indians." They write that:

> No other race or culture depicted on film has been made to assume such a permanent fictional identity. . . . Thanks to the moving

*"Tipi" will be the spelling used in this article in reference to the style of housing used by certain nations of the Great Plains area. This spelling derives from the Siouan "ti," meaning "to dwell" and "pi," meaning "used for."

> pictures, we can, let us say, lump the Apache tribes with the Mohawk Nation, call them "Indians" and assume not only a racial but an *ethnic* relationship as well. . . . Hollywood has continued to be a co-conspirator in committing cultural genocide by subverting the Native American's various ethnic identities and retaining him [sic] as a racial scapegoat.[5]

Children's* perceptions of Native Americans are formed from a variety of sources. Parents, peers and teachers help to mold attitudes. TV, movies, comics, advertisements, games and toys, food packages, and greeting cards contain stereotypes and caricatures which transmit the white-created "Indian" image.

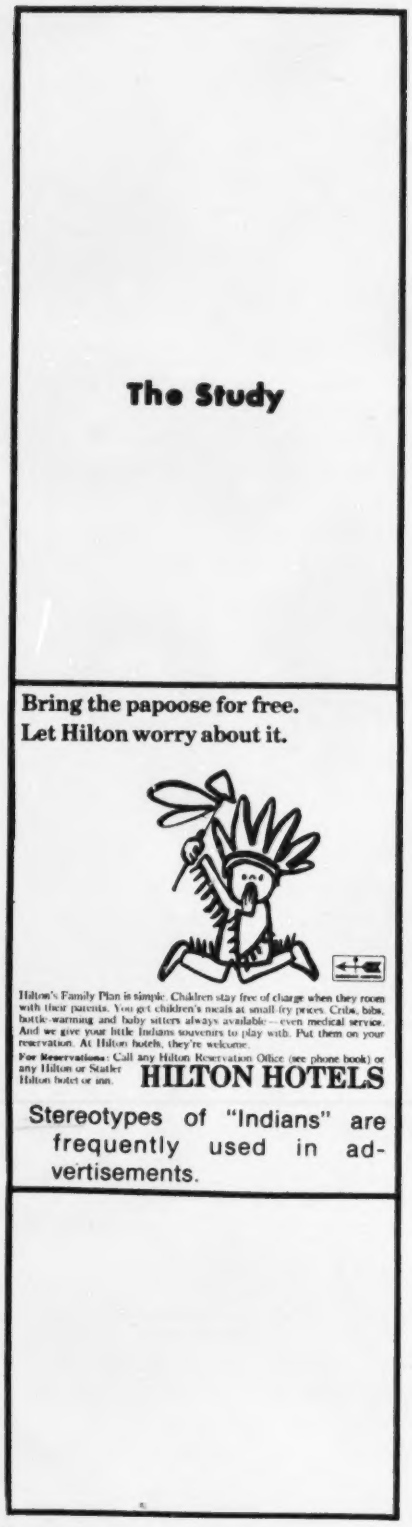
Children's books play an important role in perpetuating these images. Mary Gloyne Byler (Cherokee) analyzed 600 children's books *about* Native Americans.[6] She found depersonalization, ridicule, derision, inauthenticity, and stereotyping in the vast majority. Native people were treated in patronizing ways, portrayed as fantasy, set in an unidentified past, or juxtaposed with animals.

When reading to our own children, the authors of this present study often spotted stereotypic images of Native Americans, even when the theme and text of the books were totally *un*related to Native people. We undertook this study to analyze the context in which such stereotyping occurs in picture and in picture-story books for children under ten.** (This project was totally different from Byler's study because all books written *about* Native Americans, or any of the many books with content that could be *expected* to relate to Native Americans, such as Westerns or pioneer stories, were *not* included.)

We scanned books in children's libraries in Bergen County, New Jersey and in the Donnell Library, New York City. We also checked book stores for books too new to be on library shelves. We found 75 books containing hundreds of illustrations portraying non-Native children and animals dressed up as "Indians," as well as caricatured illustrations of Native Americans. All of these characters in all of the illustrations wear a feathered headpiece. Some illustrations additionally include buckskin clothing, moccasins, tomahawks, tipis, etc. These images appear one or more times in each of the books. Many of these books were published in the 1950's and 60's, but many recently published books contain the very same images. We did not attempt to find out how many of the older books are still in print. More to the point is that these books are still on library shelves and are still read by children. Our sample is *representative* of an unknown, but *substantially larger* number of books with similar derogatory images.

No one illustration is enough to create stereotypes in children's minds. But enough books contain these images—and the general culture reinforces them—so that there is a cumulative effect, encouraging false and negative perceptions about Native Americans.

The Study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Stereotypes of "Indians" are frequently used in advertisements.

Stereotyping occurs when an entire group is characterized in specific ways and these characteristics are attributed to all individuals who belong to that group. Native American stereotyping occurs when particular characteristics are treated as distinguishing Native people from other people. What children learn from these books is: Native people always wear feathers or headdresses; they frequently brandish tomahawks; they live in tipis; the women usually have babies on their backs; the men are fierce and violent; they lurk behind trees; they spend much time dancing on one leg; and their existence is dependent on the proximity of cowboys. Native people are not men, women and children but "braves,"

*Derogatory stereotypes of Native Americans impact negatively on *all* children, Native American or other. Our discussion will deal with the effects of such stereotypes on non-Native American children, most of whom have no direct contact with Native people.

**Picture books for the very young include alphabet and counting books, "first" books and concept books. The pictures are synchronized with minimal text, enabling the child to comprehend the story independently of the text. In picture-story books the illustrations help to interpret the text, and are inseparable from it.

The Little Boy and the Birthdays by Buckley and Galdone

"squaws" and "papooses." These attributes and behaviors epitomize the white-created "Indian" caricature ("an exaggeration by means of deliberate simplification and often ludicrous distortion of parts or characteristics"—*Webster's Dictionary*). In reality, these caricatures have no relation to Cherokee, Hopi, Passamaquoddy, Mohawk or other Native peoples.

The white-created "Indian" imagery consists of inauthentic representations of Native American peoples and cultures. This imagery is used in these books for one or more of the following functions: for *humor,* by portraying "Indians" as silly and laughable; for *fantasy,* by portraying animals or non-Native children as "Indians," or by placing "Indians" in a fictionalized, mystical past; for purely *decorative* purposes, as in the frequent addition of a headdress in a manner unrelated to the text; and for *symbolic* reasons, employed to suggest violence, danger or fear. Whether used for comical, fanciful, decorative or symbolic purposes, this "Indian" imagery degrades Native American people and cultures, and distorts non-Native children's perceptions of Native Americans.

The implications of this imagery are far more serious than would be stereotyped illustrations of German, Swedish, or French people used for humor, or inaccurate depictions of Irish, Dutch or English cultures used for decoration. Young children see white ethnic groups in many dimensions in real life or in literature, films, advertisements, and TV. But *most* of the images children receive of Native peoples and cultures are—like the images in these books—stereotypic, distorted and unreal. And these images play a crucial role in distorting and warping non-Native children's attitudes toward Native Americans. To paraphrase Kenneth Clark and other investigators regarding children's attitudes about Black people, "Children's attitudes toward [Native Americans] are determined chiefly not by contact with [Native people], but by contact with the prevailing attitudes toward [Native people]. It is not the [Native person], but the *idea* of the [Native person] that influences children."[7]

Seven Categories

As we reviewed the books definite patterns emerged, both in the ways "Indian" imagery was used and in its repeated appearance in certain types of books. We have organized this article into seven categories:

1—Books with illustrations of children "playing Indian" (*no* reference to "Indian" in text).
2—Books with illustrations of children "playing Indian" (reference to "Indian" in text).
3—Books with animals portrayed as "Indians."
4—Books with illustrations supposedly depicting Native Americans.
5—Alphabet and Dictionary books.
6—Counting books.
7—Hat books.

1—CHILDREN "PLAY INDIAN"

The 27 books with illustrations of non-Native children "playing Indian" have been divided between those with no mention of the word "Indian" in the text and those in which the children are called "Indians." We found 19 books with non-Native children wearing stereotyped clothing, without mention of any "Indian" in the text. Therefore, these images may reflect the ideas of the illustrator, rather than the author.

In *The Little Boy and the Birthdays* (Buckley and Galdone, 1965) a boy is pictured in nine illustrations wearing a headband and two feathers. In *Daddies* (Carton and Jacobs, 1963) a father sits in a chair reading a newspaper, while his son runs around with two feathers in his hair. *The Repair of Uncle Toe* (Chorao, 1972) has many illustrations of a little boy wearing a headband and feather. The cover of *You Can't Catch Me* (Bridgeman, 1976) shows a little girl wearing a headdress, and an illustration inside the book shows her in headdress again, this

time with another child wearing a cowboy hat.

Books about Halloween frequently contain illustrations of children dressed as "Indians." For example, *How We Celebrate Our Fall Holidays* (Banks, Lucy and John Hawkinson, 1961) contains an illustration of children trick-or-treating, with two of them dressed as "Indians." The title page of *Halloween Parade* (Lystad and Szekers, 1973) features a child, wearing a headdress, peeking around a door. And *Halloween with Morris and Boris* (Wiseman, 1975) contains five pictures of a girl hosting a Halloween party and wearing buckskins, moccasins and feathers.

Twelve other books in this "playing Indian" category include stereotypic items like tomahawks or bows and arrows along with "Indian" dress. And, more pernicious, all but two of these books associate "Indians" with violence.

Will I Have a Friend? (Cohen and Hoban, 1969) has five illustrations in which a boy in a group of children wears a headband and feather. In one, he carries a tomahawk, raises one foot and holds a hand to his mouth. This stance recurs in many books, suggesting a whooping, wild "Indian." *The Rooster Crows: A Book of American Rhymes and Jingles* (Maude and Miska Petersham, 1971) contains an illustration of three children running, one with headdress and tomahawk. This illustration accompanies the verse, "First's the worst, second's the same, last's the best of all the game."

One illustration in *The Day Busy Buzzy Stopped Being Busy* (Fringuello, 1970) shows "Busy Buzzy" wearing a headband and feathers. The caption reads, "Sometimes he would jump with the dog." The dog is cowering, paws over head, while "Busy Buzzy" jumps over him brandishing a tomahawk. *What's Good For A Four-Year-Old* (Cole and Ungerer, 1967) features children telling a neighbor what games they like to play. One illustration shows a boy holding balloons and floating in the air, while another boy, in headdress, prepares to shoot an arrow at the balloons. In *What's Good For A Five-Year-Old?* (Cole and Sorel, 1969) children tell what five-year-olds like to do. "Roughhouse" is one response, and four boys are shown. One—wearing headband and feathers—is fighting with another, a third whirls a lasso and a fourth carries a dagger in his mouth.

The Blackboard Bear (Alexander, 1969) contains numerous illustrations of boys playing cowboys and "Indians." The "Indians" are barefoot, wear headdresses or feathers, carry tomahawks, and shoot bows and arrows.

Ted, the central character in *Boy, Was I Mad* (Hitte and Mayer, 1969) is dressed as a cowboy. He runs away, meeting his friend Tom, who wears loincloth, buckskin shirt and a headdress. In one illustration Tom is behind a tree, with hand formed into a gun pointing at Ted, who clutches his chest and falls. Another shows them sneaking after one another, around a large rock. The text incongruously states, "Tom and I did some stunts and things like standing on our heads. And I jumped farther than Tom, and we climbed around on some big rocks."

Five other books in the "playing Indian" category are less subtle in associating "Indians" with violence. Two involve sibling rivalry and three peer aggression. *If It Weren't For You* (Zolotow and Shecter, 1966) concerns an older brother's speculation of how wonderful it would be not to have his younger sibling always around. Throughout the book, the older brother is dressed as a cowboy, the younger protagonist as an "Indian," replete with moccasins, buckskins, headband and feather. In one illustration, the "Indian" sits astride a dog (again cowering with paw over head), whooping it up after shooting an arrow at his brother, who is trying to read a book.

The situation is reversed in *I'll Fix Anthony* (Viorst and Lobel, 1969), with a younger brother fantasizing revenge against an older brother. The title page shows the avenging youngster on horseback, wearing a blanket and headdress, brandishing a lance and chasing down a bewildered sibling.

Halloween with Morris and Boris by Wiseman

The Day Busy Buzzy Stopped Being Busy by Fringuello

If It Weren't For You by Zolotow and Shecter

The Two Reds by Lipkind and Mordvinoff

What Do You Do Dear? by Joslin and Sendak

The Two Reds (Lipkind and Mordvinoff, 1950) involves a red-headed boy and a red cat. One day the boy smells smoke, peeps through a fence hole, and sees "the Seventh Street Signal Senders ready to initiate a new member." Almost all of the fifteen or so members are wearing feathers, a couple have headdresses, and some carry lances or bows and arrows. In one illustration they have the initiate on hands and knees, and in another, tied to a tree. Spotting the red-headed boy, they give chase with guns, lances and knives but, through a bit of good luck involving the cat, he gets away. The image of the befeathered "Signal Senders" remains threatening and negative throughout the story.

A sequel, *Russet And The Two Reds* (Lipkind and Mordvinoff, 1962), adds Russet, a red-headed girl. The "Signal Senders" chase Russet, capture her, and shout "A squaw! A paleface squaw!" Red rescues her and, in the end, the two are invited to "Come back sometime and join our club."

An "anti-war book," *Bang Bang You're Dead* (Fitzhugh and Scoppettone, 1969) presents a somewhat confused message. Two groups of children "playing war" suddenly begin to actually fight with rocks and sticks, drawing blood and bruises. This results in their uniting to play together—at "play war." One child is dressed as a cowboy and one wears an enormous feathered headdress.

2—CHILDREN BECOME "INDIANS"

A second category of books with illustrations of children "playing Indian" includes text in which the word "Indian" *is* applied to non-Native children. Of the eight books we found in this category, one states that the children are *pretending* to be "Indians" while in the other seven, the non-Native children simply "are Indians."

Little Leo (Politi, 1951) is a book in which white children "playing Indian" is the central theme. Leo's father buys him "an Indian Chief suit"—moccasins, buckskins and headdress. After donning the outfit Leo runs into the yard and, "With his hand to his mouth he let out strange yells. Wa-wa-wa-wa-wah! . . . Leo danced, crept, crawled, and did everything he had seen Indians do in the movies." The twist of the story is that Leo and his immigrant family return to Italy, from whence they came. There, Leo and his "Indian Chief suit" become the envy of every village child and soon all wear similar outfits. "We can all play Indian" they said. With hands to mouths they let out "yells and strange cries." The once quiet little village "was full of lively little Indians."

What Can You Do With A Pocket? (Merriam and Sherman, 1964) suggests that with varying items in your pocket you can be a cowboy, princess, fisherman, squirrel, seal at the circus, orchestra conductor, etc. These all represent occupational roles or fantasy as animals. But, "with a FEATHER in your pocket you can be an INDIAN." This sentence is accompanied by a caricature with long headdress and a pipe.*

What Do You Do, Dear? (Joslin and Sendak, 1961) is a book on "proper conduct for all occasions." On one occasion "you are an Indian chief" who invited some cowboys to smoke a "peace pipe." But when it's your turn to puff, you swallow a lot of smoke. What do you do? "Cover your mouth when you cough." The illustrations show a child with a headband and feathers sitting outside a tipi. The cover shows the befeathered child smoking an elaborate pipe.

William Steig's *CDB* (1968) has an "Indian"-costumed child addressing another child. "I M N N-D-N" says the first child. "O, I C," says the second. *Tom In The Middle* (Amoss, 1968) is about sibling rivalry. Tom has problems with both older and younger brothers but, in the end, they all get along well and "play Indian." Wearing the works, carrying bow, arrow and tomahawk, they decide to "make a tent with John's blue blanket and be sleeping Indians."

*"Peacepipe" is a misnomer applied by Euro Americans to a variety of pipes which serve a range of functions—from those used only to smoke tobacco to those sacred pipes used only ceremonially. The term "pipe" will therefore be used in this article.

Of the previously discussed books, twenty showed boys "playing Indian" as compared to three showing girls. All of the latter were books of relatively recent copyright date—1973, 1975, 1976. This is one instance of stereotyped sex-role behavior that should not be sexually integrated, but ended altogether. However, three additional examples, from earlier times, were found showing that girls, as well as boys, can "play Indian."

The jacket of Phyllis McGinley's *Sugar and Spice: The ABC of Being a Girl* (1960) states that McGinley's "work reflects her deep understanding of the heart of a woman." Hopefully, her understanding has changed over the last decade and a half, for the book is as sickeningly sexist as the title suggests. About the only non-sex-role stereotyped behavior is found under the letter "F":

> Felicia Frances is my firm fast friend.
> We have more fun
> Playing let's-pretend.
> Sometimes we're princesses, sometimes we're spies,
> Sometimes we're Indians, feathered to the eyes. . .
> Sometimes we're Eskimos,* fastened into furs,
> But she's always my friend
> And I am hers.

Colleen Browning's illustration shows a figure in a dress, wearing a headdress, holding a tomahawk high and in the "flamingo"—one-leg-in-the-air—stance. This whooping, dancing caricature is usually illustrated as a male.

I Wish I Had Another Name (Williams and Lubell, 1962) shows two children playing cowboy and "Indian." The cowgirl muses, "I'm Galloping Gertrude, the best in the West, with a pearl-handled gun and a star on my chest." The second child, of indeterminate sex, is creeping along with a headdress and tomahawk, saying, "And I'm Gitchee-Gumdrop, the Chief of the Utes; when my tomahawk flashes, you shake in your boots." In addition to yet another image of creeping, fierce "Indians," the name "Gitchee-Gumdrop" makes a mockery of Native American names. And, all of these insults are attributed to a specific Native people—the Ute.

A book that contains numerous "Indian" images is *A Child's Garden of Verses* (Stevenson and Fujikawa, 1977). Originally published in 1885, the 1977 printing carries a Grosset and Dunlap copyright of 1957. Although Stevenson was Scottish,and his work reflects a British perspective, children in the United States reading the book would not generally be aware of that. The endpaper illustrations of a child with headband, feather, bow and arrows are the most benign. A very racist verse, "Foreign Children," is accompanied by an illustration of six white children, five of them in varying national costumes. The girl who is reciting the verse wears contemporary dress. One barefoot boy wears a headdress and carries a bow and arrow, while a girl wears a headband and feather. The message to children in the United States is that Sioux, Crow and other Native children are "foreign" (as indeed they were to Stevenson) but the ethnocentrism and racism of the verse remain, even with that caveat.

> Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,
> Little Frosty Eskimo,
> Little Turk or Japanee,
> Oh! don't you wish that you were me?
>
> . . . Such a life is very fine,
> But it's not so nice as mine:
>
> . . . You have curious things to eat,
> I am fed on proper meat;
> You must dwell beyond the foam,
> But I am safe and live at home.

Sugar and Spice: The ABC of Being a Girl by McGinley and Browning

I Wish I Had Another Name by Williams and Lubell

A Child's Garden of Verse-"Foreign Children" by Stevenson and Fujikawa

*Illustrations of Inuit ("Eskimo") people and of igloos were not included in this article, as that subject warrants a separate study. There are distinct cultural, linguistic and genetic differences between the Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, etc., and Native Americans.

The Golden Picture Dictionary by Ogle, Thoburn and Knight

"The Land of Storybooks" is illustrated with a little boy, with headband, two feathers and a gun, crawling behind a sofa:

> . . .Now, with my little gun, I crawl
> All in the dark along the wall
> And follow round the forest track
> Away behind the sofa back.
>
> . . . I see the others far away
> As if in firelit camp they lay,
> And I, like to an Indian scout,
> Around their party prowled about. . .

In "The Gardener," a child muses about a gardener who is too busy to play. ". . . O how much wiser you would be, To play at Indian wars with me!" The illustration shows a little girl with a large headdress. Stevenson's book is a classic, fondly remembered by many an adult and still enjoyed by many a child. Yet it clearly reinforces stereotypes.

What's Wrong With "Playing Indian?"

"Playing Indian" is a common play activity for children—in the United States as well as in other countries. For example, the fictionalized and stereotyped works of Karl May have been enjoyed by generations of German youth, including Adolf Hitler, who loved "playing Indian" as a boy.[8] Undoubtedly most, if not all, of us have seen children hopping up and down, patting a hand against their mouths and yelling "woo-woo-woo," or raising one hand shoulder high and saying "how" or "ugh." The perpetuation of these and similar white-created "Indian" behaviors reflects the influence of peer socialization, schooling and movies. They mock Native cultural practices and demean Native people as subhumans, incapable of verbal communication.

James W. Sayre, M.D. and Robert F. Sayre, Ph.D., write of the origins of this activity in their article "American Children and the 'Children of Nature.'"

> With the crowded conditions of late 19th century cities, along with nostalgia over lost frontier simplicity and vanished Indian glory, playing Indian therefore became a recommended form of recreation for white children. In 1902, the *Ladies Home Journal* began a series of articles by Ernest Thompson Seton, the nature writer, in a "new Department on 'American Woodcraft' for Boys." The series was so popular that "tribes" of "Seton's Indians" and "Woodcraft Indians" sprang up, and Seton responded to requests for reprints of the articles by republishing them in a pamphlet entitled *How To Play Injun.* In 1906, he enlarged his material into a small book, *The Birchbark Roll of the Woodcraft Indians.* In England, Sir Robert Baden-Powell . . . had meanwhile been building the Boy Scout Movement, an out-growth of his promotion of "scouting" as a military tactic. Seton's "Woodcraft Indians" merged with Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts and the Boy Scouts of America was born.[9]

The YMCA sponsors a nationwide parent-child program called the Y-Indian Guide and Y-Indian Princess program, in which fathers and sons/daughters take on "Indian" names, form themselves into "tribes," meet every other week and "play Indian." In 1975, the Executive Committee of the Congress of American Indians passed a resolution condemning "this activity of the YMCA or any organization" and called on such organizations "to stop and put an end to such activities deemed offensive by Indian people." An analysis of the YMCA program by Native people attacked specifically the abuse of sacred aspects of certain Native cultures. A more general charge was made about the concept of "playing Indian" itself:

> Many Indian people felt that . . . taking Indian names, tribal names, wearing headbands, feathers and in general pretending like

they are Indian is offensive and mocking the Indian person. This would not happen with any other group for you wouldn't have a parent/child group pretending like they are Catholic, Jews, Chinese, Blacks or Protestants for a night every two weeks. If there was an understanding of Indians, there would be no psychological need to imitate them.[10]

The most frequent occurrences of "Indian" imagery we found in our sample were illustrations of children "playing Indian," or becoming "Indian" simply by putting on a feather. There is nothing harmful in children dressing up to play clowns, witches, cowboys, or pilots. These are *roles* that can be taken on by people of any racial, religious or national group. *But being a Native American is not a role.* Native people are human beings with diverse cultures and distinctive national identities. Being Lakota (Sioux), Hopi, Navajo, etc., is an integral aspect of their human condition. To suggest that other people can *become* "Indian" simply by donning a feather is to trivialize Native people's diversity and to assault their humanity.

3—ANIMALS AS "INDIANS"

In 1972 the National American Indian Council protested an insulting act at a Las Vegas casino in which monkeys, gorillas, orangutans and chimpanzees were dressed as "Indians." Yet children's books continue to perpetuate the same insults. In this category we found 12 books containing illustrations of animals as "Indians," the most *de*humanizing of all portrayals, for it suggests that Native people are not fully human, but rather are creatures of fantasy such as witches or elves.

The character in *Clifford's Halloween* (Bridwell, 1967) is trying to decide what her dog can be for Halloween. One choice is an "Indian." The accompanying illustration shows the dog wearing a headdress, blanket, and "war-paint," with a pipe in his mouth.

Maurice Sendak's *Alligators All Around: An Alphabet* (1962) has two alligators "imitating Indians" under the letter "I." One, wearing a headdress, looks rather fierce as it brandishes a tomahawk and does the one-leg-in-the-air-stance. The other takes a stoic pose, eyes closed while puffing a pipe. The pose, the headband and two feathers, and the pipe all share a remarkable resemblance to the child on the cover of Sendak's *What Do You Do, Dear?,* mentioned earlier. The latter book has an illustration of a dog with headband and feather, looking out from a tipi. Similarly, *Whose Hat Is That?* (Kessler, 1974) shows a cat standing beside a tipi and wearing five feathers.

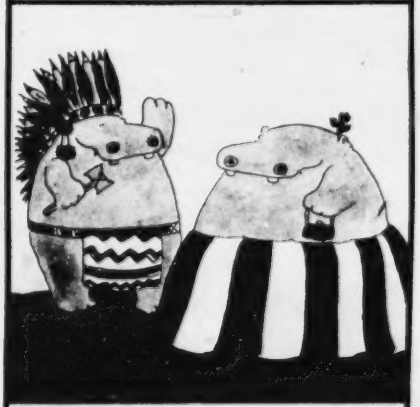
The Stupids Step Out (Allard and Marshall, 1974) contains five illustrations showing a dog wearing a headdress. Another of Marshall's books, *George and Martha Encore* (1973), is about two hippos. "George decided to dress up as an Indian" to fool Martha. Of course, his loin cloth, headdress and tomahawk do not fool the discerning Martha, who asks, "Why are you wearing that Indian costume?" However, when she sees that his feelings are hurt, she claims she only recognized him because of his bright smiling eyes. George felt much better, but one wonders how Native American children might feel reading the book (while probably not "dressed like an Indian"). The spider in *How Spider Saved Halloween* (Kraus, 1973) is having trouble disguising himself and has the same problem as George—he still looks like himself even when wearing a headband and feather.

Jenny's Birthday Book (Averill, 1954) is about a cat celebrating her birthday with cat-friends. One of them, Florio, "wears an Indian feather in honor of the birthday." A double-spread shows fifteen partying cats in a park. Fourteen are dancing while Florio, feather on head, *lurks* behind a tree. This image of stealthy, lurking "Indians" is another stereotype applied to Native Americans.

Clifford's Halloween by Bridwell

I imitating Indians

Alligator's All Around: An Alphabet by Sendak



George and Martha Encore by Marshall

Best Word Book Ever by Scarry

lose loses, lost, losing
Chief Five Cents lost all his arrows
in the woods. Then he got lost himself.
HeeHaw found him and showed him the way home

Storybook Dictionary by Scarry

Richard Scarry's *Please and Thank You Book* (1973) has thirty-three baby chicks on the title page—one wears a headdress and another a single feather. His *Storybook Dictionary* (1974) contains a buffalo named Chief Five Cents and his daughter, Penny. While Chief Five Cents is never labelled an "Indian," he wears buckskin clothing and a large headdress, lives in a "smokey tepee," and carries bow and arrows. Scarry's *Best Word Book Ever* (1974) has, among numerous animal characters, three dressed as "Indians": papa bear is named "Indian," momma bear "squaw," and baby bear "papoose." Other bears are shown as "gold miner," "cowboy," "sheriff," and "policemen." "Indian" wears buckskins and a large headdress, "squaw" wears a buckskin dress, single feather and "papoose" strapped to her back. *ABC Word Book* (1971) contains a bear wearing a headdress ("Wild Bill Hiccup"); a befeathered, buckskinned cat labelled "squaw" (who carries a befeathered kitten on her back); and a mouse in a tipi.

What's Wrong With Animals As "Indians"?

A student in a New York City public school wrote to Richard Scarry about the "Indian" bear in *Best Word Book Ever:*

> I did not like when you drew the Indian like a bear. Indians do not look like a bear and Indians do not put feathers on the heads, only on special occasions.

Scarry's response is enlightening:

> I am sorry that you don't like the Indian I drew in the *Best Word Book Ever.* I drew him as a bear because I LIKE bears and I LIKE Indians. Have you noticed that, in all my books there are only animals.
>
> The Doctor in my books is Dr. Lion. And I drew him as a lion. I have a family of pigs. And a family of bears. A policeman who is a dog. And all my firemen are pigs . . .
>
> All of this is because I prefer to draw animals. It's more fun for me. Everyone of these characters are real to me. I consider them friends. And if one of them does something a little giddy, like wearing his Indian feathers when there is no ceremony, he just does it because he feels proud to wear them. Or he does it just for fun.

Scarry claims that in his books there are "*only animals,*" yet states "I am sorry that you don't like *the Indian* I drew," revealing a confusion of terms that is precisely the problem. While doctor, police officer and firefighters are all *roles* to be applied in fantasy to animals, "Indian" animals cannot be written off as "no harm done." Whether Scarry LIKES "Indians" or not is beside the point. One assumes he also LIKES Asian people, yet thankfully there are no animals in his books dressed in stereotyped outfits and labelled "Jap," "Coolie" or other terms as derogatory as "squaw."

4—ILLUSTRATIONS SUPPOSEDLY DEPICTING NATIVE AMERICANS

A number of books without any *thematic* connection to Native Americans include illustrations supposedly depicting them.

Ho For A Hat! (Smith and Chermayeff, 1964) shows an "Indian" and his "Indian War-Bonnet" with this verse:

> See how he comes
> To the beat of the drums-
> Pow-wow-pom—
> Fire in his eyes
> Like the sun at sunrise,
> He dances around a feathered pole.
> His mocassins pound

The dusty ground;
He shakes a long stick, He rattles a rattle,
And calls on the Sun for courage in battle.
And the Indian, wearing his Indian War-Bonnet,
Looks like that . . .

This verse belittles and mocks Native American religious and cultural traditions and implies the superiority of EuroAmerican religious and cultural practices. It seems to suggest a Sun Dance. Many Native American religious beliefs and world views are based on an understanding that all things are of the Creator, and therefore sacred—including the sun. Thus a dance with the sun as a central theme is a *spiritual* ceremony directed to the Creator, and not simple worship of the sun as suggested in the verse. When books show children doing "Indian" dances (or teachers have students do "Indian" dances) it is often insulting to Native cultures, and is frequently sacriligious. Just as books and schools would not have children play at High Mass or Yom Kippur services, respect should be given to Native American religious ceremonies.

What Can You Do With a Pocket?, mentioned earlier as perpetuating the notion that a child with a feather can become an "Indian," also contains an illustration supposedly portraying Native Americans. Outside two tipis, "Indian" women—one with a baby on her back—sit around a fire, preparing food. A man sits by the fire, smoking a pipe. While aspects of the scene reflect traditional cultural practices of some Native nations, the image is stereotypic. And the verse that accompanies it is demeaning. "Walk tall, Indian brave. Cook meat by the campfire, Indian maid. Strap onto my back and sleep tight, little papoose." The image is of people of the past, suggesting to children that "Indians" do not exist in the present or that, if they do, they are less "Indian" today. Also, "brave," "papoose" and "squaw" are considered derogatory terms by most Native people.

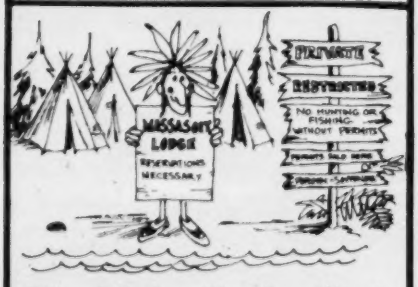
Most of the books with illustrations supposedly depicting Native people manifest the same stereotypic treatment. *Elvira Everything* (Asch, 1970) is a fantasy unconnected to Native people. One illustration shows people wearing national dress from various countries. One has a feather on her head and carries a baby on her back. The baby wears a headdress. Similar illustrations are found in *The Christmas Tree Alphabet Book* (Mendoza and Bernadette, 1971) in which people around the world are shown celebrating Christmas. One illustration, captioned "Running Deer ties ribbons of red velvet," shows "Running Deer" with a feather in her hair and a baby on her back, standing outside a tipi and tying a ribbon around the neck of a deer. While many Native people *are* Christian and *do* celebrate Christmas, it is silliness to suggest they do so by standing outside a tipi, with a feather on their head, tying a red ribbon around a deer. If a book ignores the traditional religious beliefs of many Native people and chooses to show them celebrating Christmas, it should also ignore stereotypes and portray them as modern-day people.

Similar confusion between past and present exists in *The True Book of Communications* (Miner and Evans, 1960). A page discussing "SIGNS" is all in the present tense: "We *get* many messages without words. A friend *nods* his head, *smiles* or *waves* his hand to say HELLO. . . . We *can tell* what kind of animal went by from his [sic] tracks in the sand or snow." While no mention is made of "Indian," the opposite page depicts a stereotyped "Indian" wearing moccasins, buckskins, headband and feather, and carrying a bow and arrows, following the tracks of an animal. The cover shows another "Indian," sending smoke-signals. And how did he start the fire? *Bennett Cerf's Book of Riddles* (1960) asks the question, "What is the best way to make a fire with two sticks?" And answers, "Make sure one of the sticks is a match." Innocent enough, but the illustrations show a befeathered "Indian" holding two sticks and then lighting the fire.

Cerf's *More Riddles* (1961) contains an image and verse that epitomize the detached nature of "Indian" imagery from the reality of Native people. "What

My First Golden Dictionary by Reed, Osswald and Scarry

More Riddles by Cerf



Bill Adler's World's Worst Riddles and Jokes by Malsberg

has . . . Two legs like an Indian? Two eyes like an Indian? Two hands like an Indian? Looks just like an Indian? But is not an Indian?" The questions are accompanied by a headdressed, buckskinned, dancing caricatured "Indian." The answer to the riddle, on the next page, is "A picture of an Indian," and is illustrated with a child holding a picture of the same caricature. The "Indian" image in this and other books has no reality except as a white-created caricature of Native people, true only unto itself, and the answer to this riddle unwittingly reflects that fact.

Another riddle book is *Bill Adler's World's Worst Riddles and Jokes* (Malsberg, 1976). Q. "Why were the Indians the first people in North America? A. Because they had reservations." This is accompanied by a caricatured "Indian," with twelve feathers, standing before tipis and holding a sign reading "Massasoit Lodge, Reservations Necessary." A second riddle asks, "Why does an Indian really wear feathers in his hair? A. "To keep his wigwam." Here is another caricature with headdress and pipe.

Martha The Movie Mouse (Lobel, 1966) is a story about Martha—a mouse who lives in a movie theater.

> In wonder Martha watched the screen.
> She saw things she had never seen.
> Fierce Indians with painted faces
> Fought cowboys in great desert spaces.

The accompanying illustration shows an "Indian" on horseback, wearing a headdress, loincloth, moccasins and "warpaint," about to shoot an arrow at a cowboy. And, as expected, no suggestion is given that the "Indian" is fighting to protect his homeland.

The Circus In the Mist (Munari, 1969) is a fascinating book about a trip to the circus. The book was designed with various kinds of paper (including transparent), colors and cut-out shapes, so that each page contains a part of the upcoming one, and leads ever closer to the circus. One page contains two "Indian" silhouettes. One—about to shoot an arrow—wears a large headdress; the second wears a single feather. The nonsensical caption reads, "The Indian is really from the next town and the little Indian boy is his uncle!"

Another book with illustrations based on shapes and colors is *Spectacles* (Raskin, 1968), the story of Iris and the images she saw before she acquired her eyeglasses. "Come and watch my Indian make funny faces," Iris says—and the illustration contains a figure with feather and tomahawk. But friend Chester sets Iris straight—the "Indian's" braids are part of a table cloth, the feather a TV antenna, the tomahawk a lamp, and the eyes—believe it or not—two cowboys on TV! While you may have to see it to believe it, the images work, mainly because our eyes and minds have been so conditioned to seeing certain shapes associated with "Indians."

Similar conditioning allows us to perceive the "Wild Indian" shape in *More Hand Shadows* (Henry Bursill, 1971). While this book was originally published in the 1860's, its recent re-publication with this picture and caption is unwarranted. Another book of shapes is *Ed Emberley's Drawing Book of Faces* (1975) in which directions are provided on drawing shapes to produce an "Indian" face, two feathers and a headband

5—ALPHABET AND DICTIONARY BOOKS

"Indian" is so frequently found under the letter "I" that one wonders if there is a lack of other words beginning with that letter. Most of the same problems previously described in this article recur in the alphabet/dictionary books—stereotypic clothing, feathers and tomahawks; stomping, whooping and fierce poses. But two additional problems arise. The first is the objectification of Native peoples—treating them as objects rather than as human beings. No

other group is similarly treated: the "I—Indian" is never followed by a "J—Jew" or a "P—Puerto Rican." Nor is it accompanied by an "I—Italian," even though the "I" in Indian and the "I" in Italian have the same sound. Rather, the "I—Indian" co-exists with *objects*—Igloos, Islands, Ink, etc. Not infrequently, "I—Indians" co-exists with Insects, a combination perhaps epitomized in *The Golden Picture Dictionary* (Ogle, Thoburn and Knight, 1976) which has two entries under the letter "I"—"Indians" and "Insects"—on facing pages. (The book also contains three pictures of white children "playing Indian," one of which appears on the "Contents" page, illustrating the letter "I".)

A second problem highlighted in alphabet and dictionary books is the anachronistic placement of past-tensed "Indians" with modern items or settings. Depictions of "Indians" living in tipis, dressed in buckskins, wearing headdress and "warpaint" are stereotypic not only because they generalize (e.g. "all Indians live(d) in tipis") but also because they confuse the *past* and present (tipis are rarely lived in today). For example, past-tensed, "I—Indians" eat *I*ce cream cones (*The Alphabet Book,* Eastman, 1974), walk around a modern city (*Applebet Story,* Barton, 1973), are shown with an electric *I*ron (*The Great Big Alphabet Picture Book With Lots of Words,* Hefter and Moskof, 1972) and are followed by an illustration of *S*atellites above the earth (*EVERYTHING: An Alphabet, Number, Reading, Counting and Color Identification Book,* Hefter and Moskof, 1971). These anachronisms can only lead to confusion and misconceptions about who Native Americans are and how they live and dress today.

My First Golden Dictionary (Reed, Osswald and Scarry, 1963) highlights the objectification, the past/present confusion, as well as the amalgamation of Native cultures into the white-created INDIAN. The cover portrays a one-leg-in-the-air, befeathered, tomahawk wielding "Indian" along with a fly, fish, rooster, boat, apple and crayon. Inside, accompanying an illustration of a buffalo, children read that "The buffalo *used to* roam the western plains." Five pages later, they read that "The Indian *lives* outdoors and *hunts* buffaloes." The accompanying illustration presents a grotesque caricature to children and the use of the present tense in the verse reinforces children's misconceptions of how Native people dress today (as well, one might add, how they dressed in the past). The verse could easily lead children to believe that all Native people hunted buffalo, rather than just those in the plains area. And it ignores the wide variety of housing developed by Native societies and suggests that the people lived "outdoors" in the wild.

But the "I—Indian," pervasive as it is, is not alone. Some alphabet books contain white-created "Indian" images under other letters. Children "play Indian," riddle and rhyme "Indian," and animals imitate "Indians" under many different letters of the alphabet.

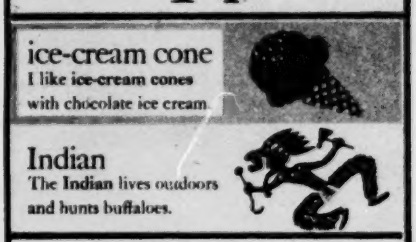
"B"—*The Golden Picture Dictionary*—a two-page spread on *B*uildings shows a white boy wearing a headband and a feather, holding a tomahawk and dancing the "flamingo" outside a "tepee." Next to that illustration is one of a boy playing a cowboy inside a play fort, with three "Indian" figures attacking.

"C"—*Grosset Starter Picture Dictionary* (1976)—a *c*anoe with a figure wearing a headband and three feathers.

"D"—*Richard Scarry's ABC Word Book*—a bulldozer, driven by a bear ("Wild Bill Hiccup") wearing a headdress and buckskins, is running amuck. "The *d*izzy, *d*affy, *d*opey bulldozer *d*river! What *d*oes he think he is *d*oing? He is *d*angerous. He has knocked *d*own the *d*rugstore, and the *d*ruggist is good and mad."

"F"—*The Golden Picture Dictionary*—on a page about *F*eet and what we wear on them, "moccasins" is accompanied by a silhouette of a child wearing buckskins and headdress, carrying a bow and arrow, and holding a hand up to his mouth.

The Alphabet Book by Eastman

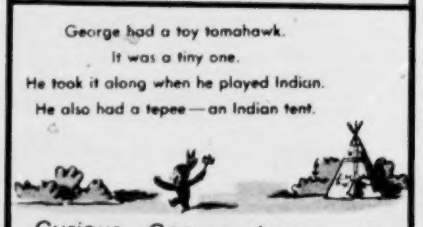


My First Golden Dictionary by Reed, Osswald and Scarry

Applebet Story by Barton

The Happy Golden ABC by Allen

The Little Golden ABC by DeWitt



Curious George Learns the Alphabet by Rey

"F"—*Sugar and Spice: The ABC of Being a Girl*—"*F*elicia *F*rances and her *f*irm, *f*ast, *f*riend" play "Indian."

"H"—*The Golden Picture Dictionary*—a page about *H*omes contains illustrations of an "adobe house," a "hogan," and a "tepee."

"I"—*Alligators All Around: An Alphabet*—two alligators "*i*mitating *I*ndians."

"I"—*EVERYTHING: An Alphabet, Number, Reading, Counting and Color Identification Book*—"nine strong and silent in the forest find the red-feathered indians."

"I"—*Richard Scarry's Best Word Book Ever*—mouse wearing a headdress and eating a large *I*ce cream cone.

"I"—*A for Angel, Beni Montresor's ABC Picture Stories* (1969)—"The *I*ndian on *I*rma's *I*sland"—headdressed, buckskinned "Indian" with hand to brow.

"I"—*Peter Piper's Alphabet* (Brown, 1959)—Peter Piper's looking at a wooden "Indian." The accompanying verse:

> Inigo Impey itched for an Indian Image:
> Did Inigo Impey itch for an Indian Image?
> If Inigo Impey itched for an Indian Image,
> Where's the Indian Image Inigo Impey itched for?

"I"—*The Alphabet Book*—"Indian" [wearing headdress, buckskins] with ice cream.

"I"—*The Great Big Alphabet Picture Book With Lots of Words*—a grotesque, war-painted, befeathered, buckskinned "*I*ndian," along with an *i*ron *i*gloo, *i*nfant, *i*nchworm, *i*nk, and *i*vy.

"I"—*The Golden Picture Dictionary*—a page of "*I*ndians" facing a page of *I*nsects.

"I"—*The Happy Golden ABC* (Allen, 1975)—befeathered, buckskinned "*I*ndian" sits on an *i*gloo writing with *i*nk.

"I"—*The Little Golden ABC* (DeWitt, 1976)—headdressed, buckskinned "*I*ndian" with tomahawk stands on an *i*ceberg eating an *i*ce cream.

"I"—*Applebet Story*—headdressed, buckskinned "*i*ndian" picks up an apple from a city side-walk.

"I"—*Zag: A Search Through the Alphabet* (Tallon, 1976)—an enormous, headdressed "*I*ndian" wraps his arms around an *i*sland. "When *I* looked around *I* was on an *i*sland surrounded by an *I*ndian."

"J"—*Applebet Story*—the "indian" tosses the apple to a *J*uggler.

"P"—*Teddy Bears ABC* (Gretz, 1975)—a bear wearing a headdress is *P*ainting a *P*icture of a tipi and an airplane.

"Q"—*Richard Scarry's ABC Word Book*—"The *Q*ueen is playing croquet with her friends," one of whom is a cat wearing a single feather, headband and buckskin dress and carrying a baby—wearing a single feather—on her back. The cat is labelled "squaw."

"R"—*Teddy Bears ABC*—the two bears, carrying the remnants of the headdress, are *R*unning in the *R*ain.

"R"—*The Christmas Tree Alphabet Book*—*R*unning Deer.

"T"—*Curious George Learns the Alphabet* (Rey, 1963)—"The small 't' is a *t*omahawk. George [a monkey] had a *t*oy *t*omahawk. It was a *t*iny one. He took it along when he played Indian. He also had a *t*epee—an Indian *t*ent." George is shown wearing three feathers and doing the one-leg-in-the-air-dance.

"T"—*Richard Scarry's ABC Word Book*—a mouse is sticking its head out of a "*t*epee."

"W"—*Zoophabets* (Tallon, 1971)—"*W*OB lives in *W*ooden Indians, Eats *w*ampum, *w*igwams, heap big *w*hitefish, *w*oolen blankets, *w*agon *w*heels, *w*arpaint."

"Z"—*The Christmas Tree Alphabet Book*—befeathered "Indian" in a scene showing Zachariah pinning up stockings.

"Z"—*Richard Scarry's ABC Word Book*—"bulldozer" still being driven by bear wearing headdress.

6—COUNTING BOOKS

Counting books frequently include "Indian" imagery, particularly under the number "10," along with the rhyme "Ten little, nine little, eight little Indians. . . ." This well known verse not only objectifies Native people as *things* to count, but also romanticizes the genocidal destruction of Native nations from the time Columbus arrived in the Americas. Estimated to have been at least 10 to 12 million in what later became the continental United States, the Native population was decimated to an estimated 232,000 by the turn of this century. In order to better understand why many Native people object to this rhyme, consider present-day German youth reciting, "Ten little, nine little, eight little Jews. . . ." This comparison is significant, since Hitler not only was fascinated by "cowboys and Indians" as a child, but told associates that his genocidal plans against the Jewish people were molded in part on his admiration of the practices of the United States against Native people, particularly in forcing them onto reservations and starving them.[11]

Counting Rhymes (Seiden, 1959) contains the verse "Ten Little Indians" and is illustrated by rows of look-a-like faces of "Indians," each with a headband and feather. *Play On Words* (Provensen and Provensen, 1972) is not actually a counting book, but one illustration depicts 10 sullen, shifty-eyed "Indians" along with the words, "X means 10. How many are X little Indians?" *Numbers, Signs and Pictures: A First Number Book* (Robinson and Murdocca, 1975) contains repeated images of a befeathered "Indian" astride a totem pole. *Ten What? A Mystery Counting Book* (Hoban and Selig, 1974) innovates. Children reading this book get to count "ten Oriental acrobats," after they have counted six mice dressed as "Indians" and six tipis. *1 2 3 For The Library* (Little, 1974) has a picture of a girl with feather, headband and buckskins, dancing the one-leg-in-the-air-step under the number eight, while Dick Bruna's *I Can Count* (1975) contains a figure wearing a headdress with eight feathers.

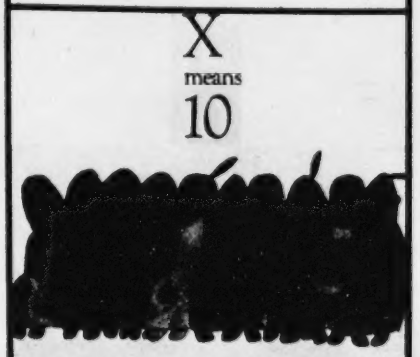
EVERYTHING: An Alphabet, Number, Reading, Counting and Color Identification Book (Hefter and Moskof, 1971) teaches all it purports, plus stereotypes. On page nine, children learn the letter "I" and the number "9," and read, count *and* color-identify nine "strong and silent in the forest find the red-feathered indians." They see these nine "red-feathered [and war-painted] indians" lurking behind trees and in tall grass. *Hailstones and Halibut Bones* (O'Neill and Weisgard, 1961) merely teaches color identification—and stereotypes. "What Is Red?" Among the answers, "Red is an Indian." This is illustrated with a cigar-store "Indian" that is red from headdress to toe.

The Marcel Marceau Counting Book (Mendoza and Green, 1971) has photographs of Marceau wearing assorted headgear and miming a related behavior. Under number 19, he "is an Indian," wearing a long red, white and blue headdress, and shooting a bow and arrow.

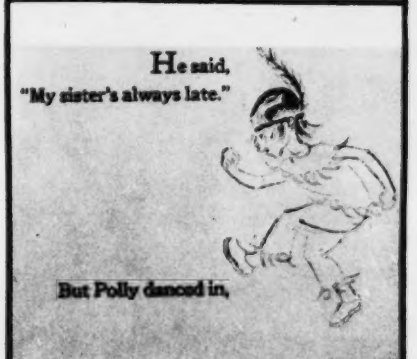
7—HAT BOOKS

Books on hats are another category that often include "Indian" imagery, primarily inauthentic representations of headdresses. *Whose Hat Is That?* (Kessler, 1974) includes a childlike drawing of a headdress with the words, "Lots of feathers in this hat. Whose hat is that? An Indian Chief's. Boom . . . Boom . . . Boom . . . Boom . . . Pow!" The opposite page depicts two white children wearing headdresses and warpaint and running around a tipi. The caption reads,

Counting Rhymes by Seiden



Play on Words by Provenson and Provenson



1 2 3 For The Library by Little

"Here come the little Indians now."

Ho For A Hat! (Smith and Chermayeff, 1964) includes a cartoon-like head in a headdress, along with a verse (discussed in section 4) which ends, "And the Indian, wearing his Indian War-Bonnet/Looks like that. . . ." *Hurrah For Hats* (Wagner and Eckart, 1962) includes an illustration of a cowboy trying to lasso a "Chief," who is wearing a headdress and carrying a tomahawk and bow. The introduction states, "Here are hats as children know them—ridiculous, useful, fascinating, revealing and even magic." One must wonder which of the above describes Native headdresses.

Because so many books use headdresses to project "Indian" imagery, some discussion of headdress is in order. *Jasper and the Giant* (Brennan, 1970)—epitomizing the use of headdress for purely decorative purposes—is a book about a lonely child and his fantasized playmate. Both wear enormous, colorful headdresses in every illustration, even though no mention is made of "Indians" or of headdress in the *entire* story.

Jasper and the Giant by Brennan

What's Wrong With This Use of Headdress?

That ever-present headdress, which is so uniformly applied by white society to *all* Native American cultures, resembles to varying degrees the headdress of the Lakota (Sioux) and some other nations of the Great Plains area. If it *is* supposed to be a Lakota headdress, did the illustrators *accurately* portray the materials and design of a Lakota headdress, the number and types of feathers, the sacred symbolism of each part and of the whole? And if the illustrator understood and carefully reproduced all this, then why is the headdress being worn by an animal or a child at play? Traditionally, headdresses were only worn in ceremonies by those people who had earned that privilege and honor. How would an illustration of a dog wearing a mitre and carrying a crucifix in its mouth be received? Ceremonial headdresses and pipes have similar religious and cultural significance to many Native peoples.

What Purpose Do These Distortions Serve?

Children's books are not merely frivolous "entertainment." They are part of a society's general culture. U.S. culture is white-dominated and racist. Children's books in the U.S. reflect our society, while at the same time reinforcing and perpetuating its racism. The ideology of racism against Native Americans developed in colonial times to justify the physical destruction of Native peoples and nations, in order for Europeans to take over their lands. The ideology was later refined to justify the genocidal policies and the treaty abrogations of the U.S., as land continued to be taken away. As the Friars note in relation to movies, "By explicitly justifying the genocide perpetrated by our forefathers, Hollywood utilizes our ignorance to enforce our egoism."[12]

But much more is involved in the perpetuation of stereotypes about Native Americans today than white "egoism" about the nation's past. The struggle of Native nations to regain their sovereignty, independence and self-determination against the encroachment of the U.S. is as real today as it was in the past. The land base held by Native nations today contains sizable amounts of valuable resources which the U.S. wants as much as it wanted the gold, coal, iron, copper, timber and land itself one hundred years ago. The "energy crisis" has put a premium on these resources—coal, gas, oil, uranium—which abound on the remaining reservation and treaty land of Native nations today. The desire of expanding urban populations in the Southwest for land and water is continuing the historical abuse of Native nations' rights and property. Meanwhile, across the country, Native peoples are increasing their struggles to regain treaty lands and rights illegally taken from them.

Whatever "positive feelings" or attempts at "understanding" underlie programs like the YMCA Indian Guide + Indian Princess , they reflect romantic

notions that lack any connection to the reality of Native people. Genuine interest in the uniqueness and diversity of Native cultures can be met by studying the cultures, without having to "play" them. And, genuine concern for Native people can best be met not by "playing" them, but by actively confronting the policies and practices of the United States which directly oppress Native people.

It is within this context that one must examine racism in children's books. To the extent that Native people continue to become inhuman, objectified "Indians" in the minds of non-Native children; to the extent that these children believe that Native Americans are people of the past or creatures of fantasy; to the extent that these children's attitude is that "all Indians are alike"; and to the extent that these children are taught to fear "Indians"—to that extent continued aggression against Native peoples is supported.

As long as citizens of the U.S. are conditioned *not* to see Native people as human beings with human aspirations, national interests, and cultural integrity, with a long history of struggle to maintain their treaty rights guaranteed by the U.S. constitution and by international law—just so long will the citizenry of today like the citizenry of 100 years ago and 200 years ago—passively condone or actively support continued aggression by the U.S. against Native peoples.

Alvin Josephy writes: "If Indians are still about as real as wooden sticks to many non-Indians, the facts concerning their present-day status in the societies of the Americas are even less known."[13] The misperception of *who* Native Americans are has a direct relationship to the misperception of their present-day situation. One reinforces the other. The children's books in this study are part of the problem. Educators and parents, illustrators and editors, can be part of the solution.

GUIDELINES

Illustrators and Editors:

While there are frequent illustrations of non-Native children "playing Indian," we did not find a *single* book in which Native American children were portrayed as classmates or playmates of these children. Sensitive and skilled illustrators should learn to portray a multi-racial group—including Native children—without relying on feathers. Editors should *insist* on this.

Accurate representations of *many* Native American cultures should appear in children's books. All children benefit from knowledge of cultural diversity. But illustrations must be drawn with knowledgeable respect and accuracy. The generalized use of "Indian" must give way to clear identification of national origin and accurate portrayal of clothing, housing, and lifestyles of the Lakota (Sioux), Navajo, Cherokee, or other Native peoples, both as they existed at varying times in the past and as they have evolved to the present. If in-house expertise is lacking, editors should pay Native people for consultation.

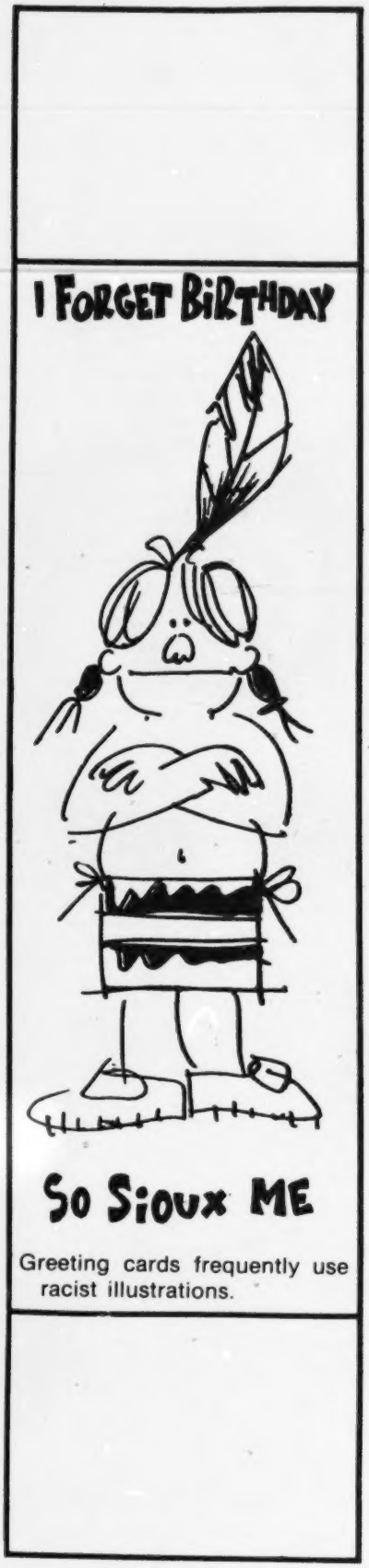
Publishers and Teachers:

Avoid generalizations such as, "Indians lived in tipis" when such cultural practices were not general among Native people but specific to certain cultures. One would not say that, "Europeans lived in windmills."

Avoid phrases such as "Mohawk Indians" which are as redundant as saying "French Europeans." Use instead "Mohawks" or "Mohawk people."

Avoid use of the terms "Indians," "Native Americans" or "Native peoples" if referring only to *one* people, such as the Seneca or the Cherokee.

If referring to Native peoples generally, use "Native peoples" and "Native Americans" as well as "Indian people."



Greeting cards frequently use racist illustrations.

Storybook Dictionary by Scarry

Footnotes

1. U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Indian Education, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge*, 1969, p. 21.

2. Alvin Josephy, *The Indian Heritage of America*, New York: Bantam Books, 1969, p. 3.

3. Michael Dorris, *Native Americans: 500 Years After*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1975, p. 4.

4. Jack Forbes, *Native Americans of California and Nevada*, Healdsburg, CA: Naturegraph Publishers, 1969, p. 134.

5. Ralph and Natasha Friar, *The Only Good Indian: The Hollywood Gospel*, New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1971, p. 2 & p. 1.

6. Mary Gloyne Byler, *American Indian Authors for Young Readers*, New York: Association on American Indian Affairs, 1973, pp. 5-11.

7. Kenneth Clark, *Prejudice and Your Child*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1963, p. 25.

8. John Toland, *Adolf Hitler*, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1976, Vol. 1, pp. 12, 14 & 15.

9. James W. Sayre and Robert F. Sayre, "American Children and the Nature,'" *American Journal of Diseases of Children*, Vol. 130, July 1976, p. 722.

10. Beatty Brasch, "A Review of the Y-Indian Guide and Y-Indian Princess Program," Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska-Lincoln, unpublished paper, pp. 38-39.

11. Toland, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 802.

12. Friar, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

13. Josephy, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

If a story contains both Native Americans and EuroAmericans, do not use "Indians" to refer to the former and "people" to refer to the latter. Use "Indians" and "whites" or "Native people" and "white people."

Avoid terms such as "squaw," "brave" and "papoose." "Woman," "man" and "baby" are accurate.

Avoid stereotypic portrayals of Native people as fierce, violent, stealthy, stoic, etc.

Avoid phrases such as "acting like a bunch of wild Indians," "Indian giver," "going on the warpath," "let's have a powwow," "sitting Indian style" (cross-legged), "walking Indian file," "paleface," or "redskin."

Do not dress up animals, or children, as "Indians."

Do not use Native people as objects to be counted or alphabetized.

About the Authors:
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Suggested Classroom Activities

A Diagnostic Activity to assess your students' present image of Native American people

*Ask **your students** to "Draw an Indian and the house the Indian lives in." (Should any of the students ask if you mean today or in the past—an excellent question—suggest that they draw whatever comes to mind first.)

*Ask **the class** to name those aspects of their drawings that identify the person as an "Indian." **Write their responses on the board.** (Chances are they'll also mention things not included in their drawings. In any case encourage them—after their initial responses—to think of additional things that they identify with "Indians.") Many—if not most—of the responses will be stereotypic and will reflect aspects of the white-created "Indian" caricature. Some students may disagree with the typical responses, and you can open discussion around such disagreement. The responses and discussion can help you determine which of the following activities will be helpful.

Activities for Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes

*Ask **the students** if they have ever met an "Indian" person in real life. (Some may have, and may talk about that person, or those persons, they met.) Ask those children who never met an "Indian" **how** they knew the way to draw a picture of an Indian person. Where have they seen "Indians" if they haven't met any? (Responses such as TV, movies and books can be expected.) Talk about the fact that most movies and TV programs showing "Indians" usually have white actors pretending to be "Indians." How does someone pretend to be an "Indian"? What does that person wear?

*Introduce **the word, "stereotype."** You might explain it as a mistaken idea about how a whole group of people behave, or think, or dress. Discuss why all stereotypes are wrong and dehumanizing, since different people in any group behave, think and look different from one another. Give, as one possible example, "A person knows two bullies who have blue eyes and brown hair. If that person decides that **anyone** with blue eyes and brown hair is a bully, then that person has created an untrue stereotype."

*Explain **that** while some Indian people do wear feathers for special occasions, like ceremonies, most do not usually wear them. But a lot of people think that **all** Indian people wear feathers **all** the time. That's a stereotype.

*Ask **the children to identify** some repeated stereotypes, using some of the illustrations discussed in the article on page 5 : feathers, tipis, dancing, fierceness, etc. Explain that these stereotypes were used by the artists who drew the illustrations in order to identify the figures as "Indians." Then look at some contemporary photographs of Native peoples such as those found in **Native Americans: 500 Years After** by Michael Dorris. How many are wearing feathers? If they do wear feathers, what are they doing? How many are carrying tomahawks? How many are living in tipis? This exercise can help to break down the image of Native Americans as people of the past, as well as the image that "Indian" people of today wear feathers and buckskins and live in tipis.

*Ask **the class what a European person is?** What is a Dutch person? An Italian? A French person? How are they different? Yet note that with all these differences, Dutch, Italian and French people are still Europeans—living on the European continent. Do **all** European people wear wooden shoes or do only the people of one European nation? Do **all** Europeans live in windmills? Note that just because the Dutch are Europeans, it doesn't mean that all Europeans do what the Dutch people do.

Ask if all Dutch people of today wear wooden shoes and live in windmills? Note that while a few still live in windmills and some wear wooden shoes, most live in other types of buildings and wear contemporary clothing. But even though their dress and housing are similar to that of other Europeans, they are still Dutch, still speak Dutch, still have cultural differences from other Europeans.

*Make **the comparison with Native Americans.** "Native American" or "American Indian" are terms like "European," that are used to identify many **different groups** of people living on this continent. Just as there are distinct nations and cultures among Europeans, there are also distinct nations and cultures among Native Americans (Navajo, Sioux, Mohawk, Cherokee, etc.). **All** Native American peoples didn't live in tipis and wear headdresses. Tipis and headdress (of the type usually seen in children's books) were found only among Native groups in the Plains area. Other nations in other areas of this continent had other forms of housing and different forms of dress. Pictures of various forms of housing are relatively easy to locate and you can show the students tipis, longhouses, wigwams, hogans, etc., discussing the various cultures which use them and the environment they were designed for. Finally, the point should be made that just as most Dutch people

no longer live and dress as they once did—yet are still Dutch—so Native people no longer live and dress as they did in the past, but their diversity remains and their cultures continue.

- **Ask students to look for examples** of similar stereotyped images on TV, on food packages, in comic books, on greeting cards or in games and toys. Encourage students to bring such examples to class or to report what they have seen and to explain why they are stereotypes.

Holidays

Most schools celebrate Columbus Day, Washington's Birthday and Thanksgiving and most children can give a number of reasons for celebrating those holidays. But many, if not most, Native people do not consider them cause for celebration. To understand a Native American perspective on these holidays, children need some new information and some new viewpoints.

Thanksgiving Day: Student Information

Most children know that Native Americans helped the Pilgrims and were invited to the first Thanksgiving feast. But most children do not know the following facts which explain why many Native Americans today call Thanksgiving a "Day of Mourning."

Before the Pilgrims arrived Plymouth had been the site of a Pawtuxet village which was wiped out by a plague—introduced by English explorers—five years before the Pilgrims landed. The nearest other people were the Wampanoag, whose lands stretched from present day Narragansett Bay to Cape Cod. Like most other peoples in the area, the Wampanoag were farmers and hunters. These Native peoples had met Europeans *before* the Pilgrims arrived.

One such European was Captain Thomas Hunt, who started trading with the Native people in 1614. He captured 20 Pawtuxets and seven Nausets, selling them as slaves in Spain. Many other European expeditions also lured Native people onto ships and then imprisoned and enslaved them.

These expeditions carried smallpox, typhus, measles and other European diseases to this continent. Native people had no immunity and some groups were totally wiped out while others were severely decimated. An estimated 72,000 to 90,000 people lived in southern New England before contact with Europeans. One hundred years later, their numbers were reduced by 90 percent. It was Captain Hunt's expedition that brought the plague which destroyed the Pawtuxet.

After the Pilgrims arrived they spent four days exploring Cape Cod. They found that Native people buried their dead with stores of corn and beans. The Pilgrims dug up many graves, taking the food. To the Native people who had observed these actions, it was a serious desecration and insult to their dead. The angry Wampanoags attacked with a small group, but were frightened off with gunfire.

When the Pilgrims had settled in and were working in the fields, they saw a group of Native people approaching. Running away to get their guns, the Pilgrims left their tools behind and the Native people took them. Not long after, in February of 1621, Samoset, a leader of the Wabnaki peoples, walked into the village saying, "Welcome," in English. Samoset was from Maine, where he had met English fishing boats and—according to some accounts—was taken prisoner to England, finally managing to return to the Plymouth area, six months before the Pilgrims arrived. Samoset told the Pilgrims about all the Native nations in the area and about the Wampanoag people and their sachem (leader), Massasoit. He also told of the experience of the Pawtuxet and Nauset people with white men. Samoset spoke about a friend of his called Tisquantum (Squanto), who also spoke English. Samoset left, promising the Pilgrims he would arrange for a return of their tools.

Samoset returned with 60 Native people including Massasoit and Tisquantum. Edward Winslow, a Pilgrim, went to present them with gifts and to make a speech saying that King James wished to make an alliance with Massasoit. (This was not true.) Massasoit signed a treaty which was heavily slanted in favor of the Pilgrims. The treaty said that no Native person would harm a white settler or—should they do so—they would be surrendered to whites for punishment; Wampanoags visiting the white settlements were to go unarmed; the Wampanoags and the whites agreed to help one another in case of attack; and Massasoit agreed to notify all the neighboring nations about the treaty.

The key figure in the treaty talks and in later encounters was Tisquantum. He was a Pawtuxet who had been kidnapped and taken to England in 1605. He managed to return to New England, only to be captured by Captain Hunt and sold into slavery in Spain. He escaped to England and—returning to this continent—met Samoset upon a ship. Tisquantum found that all of his people had died of the plague, so he stayed with the Wampanoags—some of whom had survived the disease.

Tisquantum remained with the Pilgrims for the rest of his life, and was in large part responsible for their survival. The Pilgrims were mainly artisans, and Tisquantum taught them when and how to plant and fertilize corn and other

crops. He taught them where the best fish were and how to catch them in traps, and many other survival skills. Governor Bradford called Tisquantum, "a special instrument sent of God." (While white-written history books of today still speak well of Tisquantum—calling him Squanto—many Native people of today do not consider him a hero, since his actions in no way benefitted Native American people.)

All the Native nations along the eastern seaboard practiced (and some still practice) some type of harvest feast and ceremony. The Wampanoag feast—called Nikkomosachmiawene, or Grand Sachem's Council Feast—is marked by traditional food and games, telling of stories and legends, sacred ceremonies and councils on the affairs of the nation. It was because of this feast in 1621 that the Wampanoags had amassed the food to help the Pilgrims, creating a new tradition known today as "Thanksgiving Day." This first Thanksgiving ceremony lasted three days. Massasoit came with 90 men and brought five deer as well as other food: turkey, geese, duck, clams, oysters, fish, fruits, corn, molasses, salads, maple sugar, wine. The Pilgrims, who had initially numbered 103, now numbered 55. Only five were women, and on them fell the difficult task of cooking for all these people.

Massasoit, who had done so much to help the Pilgrims, had a son named Metacomet. As time went on and more Europeans arrived and took more land, Metacomet and other Native people began to see the need to defend their nations. At the age of 24, Metacomet (called "King Philip" by the English) became the leader of the Wampanoags. He worked hard trying to form an alliance of Native nations to work together to defend their lands and way of life. In 1675 fighting broke out, and for a time it looked like the Native nations would defeat the Europeans. But after a year of fighting, Metacomet was killed and food was running short. Hundreds of Native people surrendered—including Metacomet's wife and children—only to be executed or sold into slavery. Massacres of Native villages by white men, bounties paid for Native peoples' scalps, wars, broken promises and broken treaties resulted in almost total destruction of the Wampanoag and other New England nations.

Thanksgiving Day: Suggested Activities

*__Present as much of the preceding information__ as you consider useful. Students might discuss what they think Tisquantum would have done if he had known what would happen in later years when more and more white people arrived. In a similar vein, they might discuss what caused such different reactions as Massasoit's, in 1621, and his son, Metacomet's, in 1675. Why might many Native Americans today think that Metacomet is a hero and that Massasoit and Tisquantum are not heroes? Could Native peoples and white people have lived together peacefully?

*__Tell your students__ that each year, at Plymouth Rock, there is a Thanksgiving Ceremony given by the townspeople, and there are many speeches for the crowds who come. In 1970, the Massachusetts Department of Commerce asked the Wampanoags to select a speaker to mark the 350th Pilgrim anniversary. Frank James, who is a Wampanoag, a descendant of the nation who met the Pilgrims, was chosen to deliver the speech. But first he had to show a copy of his speech to the white people in charge of the ceremony. When they saw what he had written, they would not allow him to read it. This is the speech Mr. James wanted to make.

*__Read the following speech__ to your class, prior to a discussion.

350 YEARS OF PILGRIMS' PROGRESS

It is with mixed emotions that I stand here to share my thoughts. This is a time of celebrating for you—celebrating an anniversary of a beginning for the white man in America. A time of looking back—of reflection. It is with heavy heart that I look back upon what happened to my People.

Even before the Pilgrims landed, it was common practice for explorers to capture Indians, take them to Europe and sell them as slaves for 20 shillings apiece. The Pilgrims had hardly explored the shores of Cape Cod four days before they had robbed the graves of my ancestors, and stolen their corn, wheat, and beans. . . .

Massasoit, the great Sachem of the Wampanoag, knew these facts; yet he and his People welcomed and befriended the settlers of the Plymouth Plantation. Perhaps he did this because his tribe had been depleted by an epidemic, or his knowledge of the harsh oncoming winter was the reason for his peaceful acceptance of these acts. This action by Massasoit was probably our greatest mistake. We, the Wampanoags, welcomed you, the white man with open arms, little knowing that it was the beginning of the end; that before 50 years were to pass, the Wampanoags would no longer be a Tribe.

What happened in those short 50 years? What has happened in the last 300 years? History gives us facts and there were atrocities; there were broken promises—and most of these centered around land ownership. Among ourselves we understood that there were boundaries—but never before had we had to deal with fences and stone walls, with the white man's need to prove his worth by the amount of land that he owned. Only ten years later, when the Puritans came, they treated the Wampanoag with even less kindness in converting the souls of the so-called savages. Although Puritans were also harsh to some members of their own society, the Indian was pressed between stone slabs and hanged as quickly as any other "witch."

And so down through the years there is record after record of Indian lands taken, and in token, reservations set up for him upon which to live. The Indian, having been stripped of his power, could but only stand by and watch—while the white man took his lands and used them for his personal gain. This the Indian couldn't stand, for to him, land was survival, to farm, to hunt, to be enjoyed. It wasn't to be abused. . . .

Has the Wampanoag really disappeared? We know there was an epidemic that took many Indian lives—some Wampanoags moved West and joined the Cherokee and Cheyenne. They were forced to move. Some even went north to Canada! Many Wampanoag put aside their Indian heritage and accepted the white man's way for their own survival. There are some Wampanoag who do not wish it known they are Indian for social or economic reasons. . . .

History wants us to believe that the Indian was a savage, illiterate, uncivilized animal. A history that was written by an organized disciplined people, to expose us as an unorganized and undisciplined entity. Two distinctly different cultures met. One thought they must control life—the other believed life was to be enjoyed, because nature decreed it. Let us remember, the Indian is and was just as human as the white man. The Indian feels pain, gets hurt and becomes defensive, has dreams, bears tragedy and failure, suffers from loneliness, needs to cry as well as laugh. . . .

Although time has drained our culture, and our language is almost extinct, we the Wampanoags, still walk the lands of Massachusetts. We may be fragmented, we may be confused. Many years have passed since we have been a People together. Our lands were invaded. We fought as hard to keep our land as you the white did to take our land away from us. We were conquered, we became the American Prisoners of War in many cases, and wards of the United States Government, until only recently. The necessity of making a living in this materialistic society caused us to be silent. Today, I and many of my people are choosing to face the truth. We ARE Indians! . . .

What has happened cannot be changed but today we work towards a more humane America, a more Indian America where men and nature once again are important. . . .

You the white man are celebrating an anniversary. We the Wampanoags will help you celebrate in the concept of a beginning. It was the beginning of a new life for the Pilgrims. Now 350 years later it is a beginning of a new determination for the original American. . . .

We still have the spirit, we still have a unique culture, we still have the will and the determination to remain as Indians. We are determined that this is only a beginning of the American Indian to regain the position in this country that is rightfully ours. □

*Discuss the speech, raising some of the following questions. Why did Wampanoags fight the European settlers? What did Mr. James mean when he said Native people were like "Prisoners of War"? Should he have been allowed to make his speech? Why? What does the word, "Mourning," mean? Why do many Wampanoags and other Native people call Thanksgiving a "Day of Mourning"?

Further discussion may center around the fact that Native peoples believe that land, like air, is for everyone and no one person should own it for themselves. Ask students what they think of this notion. What did Europeans believe land was for?

*Tell the students that the Massachusetts' officials told Mr. James that, "The Indians **were** mistreated, but now is a time to celebrate brotherhood." Reread the last paragraph of Mr. James' speech to the class and ask them how he disagrees with the officials' viewpoint. Ask the class if they know of any of the things for which Native American people in different parts of the country are struggling today (*Akwesasne Notes* can be a very helpful resource here).

Note: Much of the material in this Thanksgiving section is based on *A Thanksgiving Curriculum: Offering a Native American Viewpoint.* That curriculum was prepared by People Against Racism in Education (PARE), a New York organization of parents, teachers, school workers and students working to combat racism. Their address is Box 972, Cathedral Station, New York, N.Y. 10025.

Columbus Day: Student Information

Most children know that Columbus was lost when he found his "New World," for he expected to land in India. His ships landed in what is now called the Bahama Islands, and the first people he met were the Arawaks. Their society was based on village communes where most property was jointly held. They had a developed agricultural system, and they spun and wove. Being very friendly, they were ready to share what they had with the newcomers. But Columbus had other ideas and, on October 12, 1492, he wrote, "It appears to me that the people are ingenious and would be good servants." On October 14 he wrote, "With 50 men we could subject them all and make them do whatever we want." And, that same day, he also wrote that the land had great riches and as many "slaves as one could wish for." Columbus' men

enslaved many Natives, despite the fact that he had written to the King and Queen of Spain:

> They are a loving people without covetousness. So tractable, so peaceable are these people, that I swear to your Majesties there is not in the world a better nation. They love their neighbor as themselves, and their discourse is ever sweet and gentle, and accompanied with a smile; and though it is true that they are naked, yet their manners are decorous and praiseworthy.

Columbus, sure that he was in India, called the people "Indians." And over the years, Europeans who followed him did the same, even though they knew that the land was a vast continent, occupied by hundreds of different cultures, each of which had its own language and name. But most of the Europeans were not interested in learning about the different nations and cultures and just kept calling all the different kinds of people "Indians," as if they were all alike.

The first Europeans had been sent by their rulers to find new ways to make money. And so Columbus, and the people who came after him, set out to find riches like gold, spices or slaves. In the process they killed and enslaved many Native people. Columbus made other voyages, searching for gold he never found. And he left the islands cruelly destroyed, sometimes killing all the people, like the Arawaks, who had greeted him on his arrival.

Europeans believed that they had "discovered" the land and it was theirs. They called it the "New World." To the Native people, it was an "Old World."

So most Native Americans today don't celebrate Columbus Day. The arrival of Columbus was the beginning of an invasion by Europeans, who took the land of the Native nations, bringing them war, disease and death.

Note: *Columbus: His Enterprise* by Hans Koning (Monthly Review Press, 1976) is a valuable source for a non-traditional view.

You might read the students sections from Koning's book and discuss why Native people don't find much about Columbus to celebrate, and whether non-Indian people should celebrate **everything** he did and **everything** he stood for.

Columbus Day: Suggested Activities

***After presenting the students with the preceding information,** have a few students **volunteer to role-play** the Arawaks and a few to role-play the Europeans. Brief the role-playing students, making sure each side understands the difference in viewpoints which they will be acting out.
Afterwards, the class should discuss the issues, and decide whether the behavior of the Europeans was fair, kind or just, and how they would feel if someone came to their country to make them slaves and to take away riches.

***Tell students about Adam Norwall,** a professor from California, who is Ojibway. In 1973 he put on some traditional Native clothing, flew in a jet plane to Italy and said, when getting off the plane: "In the name of the Indian people, I claim the right of discovery and take possession of this land." He said that if it was valid for Columbus to "discover" America when Indians had been living there thousands of years, then he could claim Italy. Talk about the point Professor Norwall was trying to make.

***Tell students that Vine Deloria, Jr.,** a Standing Rock Sioux from South Dakota, has written many books explaining Native peoples' viewpoints. Deloria wrote the following imaginary diary entry, dating it February 12, 1510.

> We had a real crisis today. Another "Big Canoe" pulled up on the beach and another European got out. He is from Italy like Chris Columbus was and his name is Americus Vespucci. We have been running into quite a few Italians lately and they seem to share this Indian kick. Anyway the horrible thought suddenly occurred to the tribal council. It seems that since Columbus landed everyone has been calling us "Indians." We have pretty well convinced them that it is not India, but we know that sooner or later they will find a name for our country. They might do some nutty thing like name it after one of these Europeans, such as our guest. Then I suppose they would call it "America" and since they still insist on calling us Indians we could end up with the tab of "American Indians" instead of our tribal names. That is something to contemplate but the council thinks it will never happen.

***Discuss the points made** by Deloria. Then ask the students why Native people prefer to be called by their national (tribal) name. At this point, you can ask students to name some nations (tribes) they know of, or you can introduce the names of some Native nations: Mohawk, Navajo, Penobscot, Wampanoag, etc. Emphasize that while many Native societies were totally destroyed by the white people, there are still over 200 in the United States today.

***Explain that** many people prefer the term "Native American" or "Native people"—rather than "Indian"—to describe themselves. Since their ancestors were the *original* inhabitants of this land, they were native to this continent, whereas Europeans, Africans and Asians are originally from other continents. (The attempt here is not to prevent children from using the term "Indian," but to help them understand why some Native people object to it.)

Washington's Birthday: Student Information

While students are familiar with many aspects of Washington's activities, some of his actions which impacted upon Native Americans are not widely known. Therefore, you may wish to share some of the following facts with your students. The information is derived from original historical documents, as reported in The Writings of George Washington, *edited by John C. Fitzpatrick and from Charles A. Beard's* An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution.

George Washington fought Native peoples during the "French and Indian War." As payment he received thousands of acres of Native peoples' land on the south bank of the Ohio River—land given him by the British, not by the Native people who lived on the land. He also owned shares in the Mississippi Company, a land speculation group that "held" 2.5 million acres of Native land in the Ohio Valley. Native people still lived there and had never given it to the Company.

Washington was a slaveholder (at the time of his death, in 1799, he held 317 Black people in slavery). Like other large plantation owners, he was often in debt to British merchants. To help meet this debt, he and others speculated (bought and sold) in Native lands, as a way of making quick profits. Because much of the land in the thirteen colonies was in large estates, common people who wanted to buy land were encouraged to "settle" west of the Alleghenies, paying the land speculators handsome profits, while the Native people, whose land it was, received nothing and lost their lands.

In 1763 the great leader of the Ottawa nation, Pontiac, united 18 Native nations to fight this white invasion of their lands. The confederacy he formed almost defeated the British. In an effort to stop such fighting, the British King issued the Proclamation of 1763. It said that no more white settlements could go west of the Allegheny mountains and demanded that white settlements already there "forthwith . . . remove themselves."

This action threatened the financial interests of Washington and other wealthy colonists (like Patrick Henry and Benjamin Franklin) who had bought land in the forbidden area. But the King's Proclamation didn't stop Washington. He employed a surveyor to secretly locate more valuable land for him. Washington wrote to a friend:

> Between ourselves, [the restrictions should be viewed] as a temporary expedient to quiet the minds of the Indians. . . . Any person, therefore, who neglects the present opportunity of hunting out good lands . . . will never regain it.

At his death, Washington "owned" 40,000 acres of Native American land west of the Alleghenies.

Because of the activities of men like Washington, most Native nations decided not to support the colonists in their struggle against Britain. But Britain, too, had a record of breaking promises made to Native nations. That is why many of them, like the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, tried to remain neutral during the Revolutionary War. However the British used lies to trick some warriors from the Confederacy into fighting for them at the battle of Fort Stanwix. In retaliation, George Washington ordered a military campaign against the Iroquois Confederacy. On May 31, 1779, Washington wrote to General Sullivan:

> The expedition you are appointed to command is to be directed against the hostile tribes of the Six Nations of Indians with their associates and adherents. The immediate object is their total destruction and devastation and the capture of as many persons of *every age and sex* as possible.
>
> It will be essential to ruin their crops now on the ground, and prevent their planting more. . .
>
> Parties should be detached to lay waste all settlements around, with instructions to do it in the most effectual manner, that the country may not be merely *overrun,* but *destroyed.* . .

The records of the destruction by General Sullivan report that:

> The force under Col. Daniel Brodhead burned 11 towns, containing about 165 houses, which for the most part were constructed of logs and framed timber. They destroyed more than 500 acres of cultivated land, and took loot estimated at $30,000. Many homes were large and beautifully painted, with architecture that impressed the officers.

As Sullivan wrote in his official report:

> The quantity of corn destroyed might amount to 160,000 bushels, with vast quantities of vegetables of every kind. . . We have not left a single settlement or field of corn in the country of the Five Nations, nor is there even the appearance of an Indian on this side of the Niagara."

Washington's Birthday: Suggested Activities

***After presenting the previous information to the students, discuss** why most Native Americans—as well as many Black people—do not consider George Washington's Birthday a day for celebration. Another possible point of discussion is what the phrase, "Father of Our Country," could mean to a Native American child.

Background Information

The following background information is to assist you in explaining why Native people consider much of the imagery used by illustrators to be insulting, and sometimes sacrilegious. Most of the information concerns the Sioux, since so much of the "Indian" imagery is based on their Plains culture.

Religion

For the most part, traditional Native religious beliefs are not a separate and distinct part of their society and culture, as is the practice of Christianity, for example. Rather, they are integral to every aspect of life and the natural world. Because all things are of the Creator, all natural things are respected, be they human, animal, plant or otherwise. (It is not suggested that you involve your class in a discussion of Native American religious views and beliefs. Few non-Indian people have enough understanding of the intricate and diverse nature of this subject to adequately deal with it.)

While there are specific religious ceremonies as well as social ceremonies, religious dances as well as social dances among the Sioux, the spiritual values that permeate the Sioux cultures tie religious aspects into social events. Thus, to act out or "play" aspects of those cultures risks ridiculing them and involves sacrilegious contempt as well.

The sacred pipe is the most sacramental object in Sioux religious belief. The drum, often the only instrument used in sacred ceremonies, is played only by those who know the intricate songs. (The familiar drum beat of Hollywood movies is a simplistic white-created beat that does not reflect the range of sound found in traditional music.) And every Native culture has a repertoire of ceremonial dances which require precise steps (not the hopping up and down used by non-Indian children "playing Indian").

Headdress

Similar spirituality is reflected in traditional clothing and housing. For example, to the Oglala Sioux, the eagle is a symbol of freedom, pride and honor, a winged creature that is next to the Creator and represents freedom. Among the Oglala, 36 eagle feathers are used in a Wapaha, a traditional headdress that is a symbol of pride, honor and leadership. The privilege of wearing the headdress has to be earned by acts of bravery, generosity, honesty and loyalty. The headdress is traditionally worn only in special ceremonies. The notching and coloring of the feathers and the addition of other materials also have symbolic meaning, telling of the wearer's deeds. While the headdress of other nations may have some similar meanings, cultural differences remain.

Tipis

Similarly, housing styles reflected cultural adaptations to environment. The tipi was used by nations in the Plains area. Some used a three pole foundation for the structure, while others used a four pole foundation. There were differences in the design of the smoke flaps and the fashioning of the entrances. The greatest diversity existed in the decoration of the tipi, where many symbols were used for religious meaning and to record historical events. The decoration of tipis was a highly developed form of art. Among the nations of the Plains, it was the responsibility of the women to design and erect the tipis. This job required great skill.

Painted Tipis by Contemporary Plains Indian Artists is a useful source of information on construction and design of tipis, and contains numerous color plates of decorated tipis [see Resources, p. 31]. The book notes that:

> As a shelter, the Plains Indian tipi is extremely functional:—it is warm in the winter, cool in the summer, able to withstand wind and rain and it is easy to erect and dismantle. Smoke flaps or ears of the tipi cover serve as dampers to regulate the draft, ventilate the tipi and carry off the smoke. The tipi is especially adapted to provide good shelter against tornadoes:—the scourge of the Southern Plains region, as the strong winds cannot pick up the inverted surface of the tipi. Another architectural feature of the tipi which was a definite advantage in the hot, scorching summer climate of the Plains is the cooling effect created by the movement of hot air up the sides of the tipi cover through the smoke hole and the influx of cooler air flowing in around the bottom of the tipi. At the same time, the tipi was snug and warm in winter due to well-designed interior furnishings such as a dew cloth hung from the poles around the interior of the tipi for insulation. During the winter months, a common method of protecting the tipi was to build willow windbreaks. (p. 14)

You can use the *Painted Tipis* book to compare the skilled decoration of tipis and their symbolism with the casually drawn tipis found in children's books.

Because the image of "Indians" presented to children in this society is one of fierceness, savagery and violence, it is possible that some of your students may mention "Indian scalping." If this happens, the following information may prove useful.

Scalping

Before the white invasion, warfare between Native nations was limited. It was often a kind of ritual with accepted rules, and less killing and economic loss than occurred in European warfare of the time. In many societies, greater honor was attached to touching the opponent than to killing him. And killing, when it did occur, was generally limited only to warriors—noncombatants were either assimilated into the victorious nation, forced to move elsewhere or expected to recognize the victor's preeminence with the payment of symbolic tribute. There was usually little attempt to systematically destroy food or property.

Scalping had been known in Europe as far back as ancient Greece. The practice in the American colonies of paying bounties for Native scalps—similar to the English practice in Ireland of paying bounties for heads—is credited to Governor Kieft of New Netherlands. By attaching a profit motive to the practice of scalping, Europeans were encouraged to step up the slaughter of Native people to ease the take over of more territory. By 1703 the Massachusetts Bay Colony was offering $60 for each Native scalp. And in 1756, Pennsylvania Governor Morris, in his Declaration of War against the Lenni Lenape people, offered "130 Pieces of Eight, for the Scalp of Every Male Indian Enemy, above the Age of Twelve Years," and "50 Pieces of Eight for the Scalp of Every Indian Woman, produced as evidence of their being killed." Massachusetts, in this period, was offering bounties of 40 pounds for a male Indian scalp, and 20 pounds for scalps of females or of children under 12 years old. Thus, the European practice of paying for the scalps of men *and* women reflected the intent of their warfare—the annihilation of the Native population. As this became clear, Native nations responded to the threat and changed their own methods of warfare, including the practice of taking scalps.

Much of what is written about "Indian" violence and scalping reflects the perspectives of the Europeans who wrote the early books and articles describing the period. Accounts written by Native American people would differ in their version of who was or was not cruel, or who was and who was not defending their homes. But it is always the victors who write the history books, and it is the white viewpoint which has dominated most accounts of our past.

Classroom Resources

Akwesasne Notes: Mohawk Nation, via Rooseveltown, N.Y. 13683

An invaluable newspaper for anyone concerned with obtaining current information on the lives and struggles of Native people today. Offers extensive listings of books, records, posters and other materials that can be utilized in the classroom. Free sample copies are available, subscriptions are $5/year, more if you can.

Native Americans: 500 Years After, Photographs by Joseph C. Farber. Text by Michael Dorris. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, N.Y., 1975

An expensive book perhaps best purchased by the school library. Valuable for hundreds of photographs of Native peoples' life around the country today. Useful in breaking down children's perceptions of Native Americans as people of the past.

American Indian Authors for Young Readers, Mary Gloyne Byler, Association of American Indian Affairs, N.Y., 1973

Introduction is an excellent discussion of common problems in children's books *about* Native peoples. Also provides an annotated bibliography of books, for children, written by Native people.

The Weewish Tree, Published by the Indian Historian Press, 1451 Masonic Ave., San Francisco, CA 94117

This is a magazine for young children. Subscriptions are $6.50 per year, bulk rates are available. It offers stories, poems and information about Native Americans.

Painted Tipis by Contemporary Plains Indian Artists, U.S. Dept. of Interior, Indian Arts and Crafts Board. Anadarko, Oklahoma: Oklahoma Indian Arts and Crafts Cooperative, 1973

What One Teacher Has Done

Part I

Role Play in the Class Room

by Jane Califf

"What do you know about Indian people?" I asked a class of first graders.

"They kill people."

"They tie people to a stake and burn them."

"They chase people from their homes."

I was shocked. Somehow I thought that six-year-olds are too young to have internalized such stereotypes, but I had underestimated the power of TV, books and comics. Most assuredly, the children's responses did not fit into my lesson plan. I had come to class prepared to talk about the everyday life of the Lenni Lenape, who had once lived in the part of New Jersey where I was then teaching. I wanted to instill in my students a respect for the harmonious way the Lenni Lenape coexisted with nature, their ingenious use of plants and animals, the care with which they raised their children, their sharing of food and work, how they made medicines from certain plants, their beautiful craftwork.

I thought that if my students could appreciate these aspects of Lenni Lenape life, I would be helping them to understand and respect Native Americans. However, I realized that all of this would not be enough to counteract the false impressions the children in my class had of Native Americans as "savages" and "killers." I would try again.

I invited a Native American parent to visit the class and help me put on a skit to demonstrate *why* Native Americans fought the white settlers. I introduced the parent as a member of the Penobscot Indian Nation. An excited murmur echoed through the room at the thought of seeing a "real live Indian."

Setting the stage for the skit, I told the children that our guest would pretend to be a Lenni Lenape and that he and I were about to put on a play about the Native Americans who were the first people to live in and around Plainfield, New Jersey, where the school was situated. I described how different the area looked then. I took the role of the people from across the ocean who, because they were poor, unemployed and landless, were coming to find a better life for themselves. I told the class to pretend that the hall was the ocean and the classroom was where the settlers landed.

I went out into the hall after explaining that when I reappeared, it meant I had just completed a long ocean voyage and would need a place to live.

When I entered the classroom I asked, "Who's that?" pointing to the Native American parent. "An Indian!" "Well, I'm going to see if he will give me some land." I explained my need in pantomime since we didn't know each other's language, and he graciously let me use one-fourth of the room. Meanwhile, he showed me what animals to hunt, how to hunt, what vegetables to eat and how to plant them.

Children Get Involved

Another boat came; the act was repeated. Several times this happened until my collaborator was standing in a corner of the classroom with one square foot of space left.

I said, "I think I hear something again." "Not another boat!" several children exclaimed and ran to the door to check. "Yes, there's another boat!" they said, thoroughly caught up in the drama.

"Come on over," I called, and 50 more phantom settlers entered the room. I asked the class, "Should the Lenni Lenape give up his space in the corner for these new people ?" "No," one boy said seriously, "because then he would be in the closet." The class laughed. A girl jumped up. "If he has to give up that little piece of land, then he won't have any land at all, and that's no laughing matter."

"Let's take sides then," I suggested. "Some of you be Lenni Lenape people, and some of you be settlers with me. We'll have to discuss this problem." They chose sides. A "settler" on my side began: "We're going to take all your land." "No, you're not!" said a young "Lenni Lenape," stamping her foot.

Suddenly and spontaneously, a "war" broke out. Children pushed, shoved, leapt over desks and ran around the room defending their side in a mock battle. They became so caught up in the action that we were able to bring the drama to a close only with some difficulty.

"What happened?" we then asked. "There was a fight!" "Why?" "Because they were going to take all of the Lenni Lenape's land, and that wasn't fair."

We then summarized the point of the skit, suggesting that the next time they watched a TV show in which Native American people were fighting settlers, they would understand a little better why. It was not that Native Americans liked to kill people, but that despite their hospitality to the newcomers, their land and homes were being taken away and they had to fight back. I did not pursue this any further except to say that most of the Native Americans' land was eventually taken from them by force. Native Americans fought back but lost, I told my class, and now there are only a few places left that they can call their own.

I could have added, but did not, that denial of Native American rights to land that they claim by treaty continues to this day. The occupation of Wounded Knee occurred about this time, and TV news programs were filled with the latest events in the battle between U.S. troops and descendants of the Sioux people, many of whom had been massacred in that same location 80 years before. But since I thought it would be too difficult to explain what was happening to six-year-olds, I never discussed it with them.

A month later, a substitute teacher took the class and the subject of Native Americans came up. In describing our classroom drama, one child shouted, "And then he was standing over there in the corner!"; the teacher asked, "And what was that called?" Answered one child: "Bandaged Knee."

For Older Children

I learned much from this incident. This child had made a connection between contemporary events on the TV screen and the drama that had unfolded in our classroom four weeks earlier. Yet, I had not helped the children make the connection, having underestimated their capacities—a common failing among teachers.

With older children, I have varied the drama. Usually a simple confrontation between Native Americans and settlers, in which each side presents its views, is enough to make clear the legitimate anger of Native Americans over the theft of their land. One second grader thought an Indian was "a person who stands on a rock, and when a cowboy walks by he goes POW! on his head with a tomahawk." "Why?" I asked. "I don't know," he replied. In the role-playing situation I chose him to be a Native American defending his people's right to their land. He put up a good defense, and it was clear his attitude was changed as a result of participating in the role-play.

One of the criticisms now being leveled at our teaching about Native Americans is that we relegate them to the past. Efforts should be made to counteract this. One possibility might be a follow-up skit in which one of the children takes the role of a Native American child today and tells how she or he would feel about seeing the skit described above.

Critical Thinking

In addition, from time to time, I have elementary school children act out scenes from recent events as one method of countering stereotypes. Events or concepts which may seem remote when merely discussed become real and meaningful to children who act them out and to those who watch. As they are compelled by the roles they play to think and respond, children are stimulated to think more critically and carefully. As they see stereotyped attitudes and behavior portrayed and challenged, the error of these attitudes and behavior becomes clearer. It also becomes clearer that racism should not be overlooked or passively accepted.

The apparent effectiveness of the approach which I have described was brought home to me forcefully some time later. A seven-year-old, who felt keenly the injustices Native Americans have suffered, told me that one night he was watching a TV program in which he saw Native Americans portrayed as wildly attacking peaceful settlers. "I went right up to the TV and turned it off. I told my mother and father that that wasn't a fair movie." □

Voices from Wounded Knee
available from
Akwesasne Notes
(See page 31)

Sensitizing Nine-Year-Olds to Native American Stereotypes

What One Teacher Has Done

Part II

by Jane Califf

My recent experiences in attempting to sensitize fourth and fifth grade students to stereotypes of Native Americans (American Indians) in trade books have confirmed my longheld faith in young people's intelligence, and in the possibility of freeing future U.S. generations from biased perceptions of themselves and of others. The methods I have been using in my classroom are by no means fully developed; I must reexamine and work towards improving them. However, I wish to share them with *Bulletin* readers because they have been successful on several counts and may prove useful to other teachers in their efforts to develop awareness and analytical skills in their students.

My overall classroom objectives were to help my students:

- recognize and identify with the humanity of Native American people;
- understand the diversity and richness of Native American cultures;
- appreciate Native American values and lifestyles;
- understand the oppression to which Native peoples have been subjected;
- perceive the media misrepresentation of Native peoples; and, finally,
- realize that change can and should be fought for.

What might be called the first phase of our classroom study (a two-month period of 45-minute classes approximately twice a week) focused on Native American life and on the interaction of Native Americans with the first European settlers.

I posted colorful charts of Native American clothing, toys and implements obtained from *Akwesasne Notes* (see Resources p. 31), avoiding the inauthentic, commercially produced items often found in classrooms. We noted the skills and imagination required to produce these materials and discussed the significance of certain forms of decoration (for example, a particular culture's headdress might be worn only on certain ceremonial occasions). We discussed the wisdom underlying many Native American practices, such as leaving a wide space between a village and the woods so that forest fires would not destroy the people's homes. As part of the study of lifestyles, the art teacher led a project focusing on housing, dress and diet in which, among other things, the children constructed models of Hopi houses.

We talked about Native American values—the respect for nature and for the elderly, emphasis on sharing through communal ownership of property. We listened to recordings of traditional Native music. (Later we listened to Buffy St. Marie, a contemporary Native American folksinger, and discussed her song about the Native take-over of Alcatraz.)

Regarding Native American relations with the Pilgrims, we discussed how the former helped the newcomers survive. For example, we noted the Pilgrims' ignorance about the local flora and fauna, about certain foods which they had never known in Europe, about how to cultivate the land and grow certain crops.

We then discussed the genocide committed by the white settlers against Native Americans. I feel that while it is important for children to understand Native cultures and values, it is equally important for them to learn about the oppression suffered by Native peoples in the past and today. I explained how the newcomers gradually began to encroach on Native land in violation of numerous treaties signed to protect that land, and how the settlers killed Native Americans

who resisted the encroachment. (Here, I was particularly concerned with countering the widespread image of Native Americans as wanton savages who, for no good reason, rampage and kill. Role-playing was a useful device in this regard—see "Role-Playing in the Classroom," on page 32). To underscore the monumental nature of the injustice done to Native Americans by the settlers, I read aloud from materials written by Native Americans themselves, including the story of Black Hawk (see Resources p. 31) and articles from *Akwesasne Notes* about the ongoing fight for land and water rights. Here, I also used protest posters.

We discussed how reservations come into being and the poor quality of life in these areas—the lack of hospitals and jobs, the forced separation of children from their families to attend faraway boarding schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In response to questions about why such conditions are allowed to prevail, I explained that the white people who make the laws which govern Native American life are continuing to take Native land and resources (coal, timber, oil, etc.) without making compensation and without regard for the rights and needs of Native people. In retrospect, I'm sorry I did not introduce the concept of racism more openly and will do so in the future.

Discussion of Native American oppression and negative white perceptions of Native peoples led into a consideration of Native American images in various media. We talked about misrepresentations of Native American speech (the "ugh, how" syndrome) in advertisements, books, etc., drawing upon our knowledge of the reality that Native Americans do not express themselves in grunts and groans, either in their own languages or in English. We also talked about the constant depiction of Native people wearing feathers and brandishing tomahawks.

At this point, the children became alert to examples of offenses against Native Americans in everyday life. One student told the class that she had not permitted her mother to buy her a book bag with a red-faced, befeathered "Indian" on it because "it makes fun of Indians." When another student appeared in class one day clad in a shirt with a picture of an "Indian" on it, a discussion ensued as to whether "Calvin is making fun of Indians." The concept that such images dehumanize Native people and turn them into objects is an important one for students to understand.

The second phase of our study was now in progress. Armed with our newly-acquired knowledge of the histories and cultures of Native peoples, we turned our attention to the depiction of Native Americans in children's books.

I brought into class a collection of books that are full of stereotypes and other flaws from the school and local public libraries. (My selection was based on the concept that flawed books are effective consciousness-raising tools.) I also brought the booklet *American Indian Authors for Young Readers* published by the Association on American Indian Affairs. I explained to my students that the booklet tells how Native Americans had carefully read 600 children's books and had discarded most of them because they did not accurately reflect Native American life and histories. Since almost all of the discarded books had been written by non-Native Americans, the author of the bibliography had decided to recommend only books written by Native people.

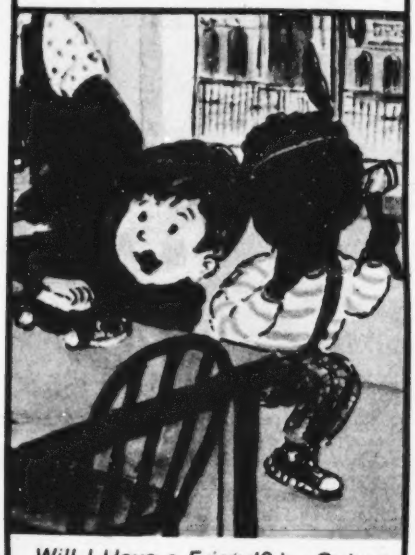
Why? I asked my students. A short discussion ensued which ended in general agreement that Native American people would be more likely to know about their own cultures than someone who was an outsider to these cultures Then, I listed the following criteria on a large piece of paper:

1. Look at the illustrations. Do they show all Native Americans looking alike, red in color or as savages?

2. Listen to the words. Do they imply that Native Americans were/are naturally wild and warlike or that they attacked peaceful settlers or other Native peoples for no reason?

American Indian Authors for Young Readers
A selected bibliography

More Hand Shadows by Bursill



Will I Have a Friend? by Cohen and Hoban

3. From what you've studied about Native American peoples, does the author seem to be portraying their lives accurately?

4. Does the author give the national name of the people such as Navajo, Hopi, Mohawk or Cherokee; or does the book just say "Indians," implying that all Native Americans are the same?

5. Do the Native people speak in pidgeon English, in grunts, or do they speak in sentences as all people do?

I said to the class: "Guided by these criteria, I want you to ask yourselves, 'If I were a Native American, would I like this book? Does it seem to portray my people fairly?'"

Throughout our book survey, I used the method of asking leading questions or giving clues to elicit responses from the students. For example, I would read a sentence from a book and if the students seemed perplexed and failed to comment, I would read the sentence again emphasizing a particular word or words. Regarding illustrations, I might ask "What color are the Native people?" to focus attention on the flaming red skin color which often characterizes pictures of Native Americans.

We began with the book *More Hand Shadows* by Henry Bursill. This book tells how to make shadow patterns on a wall and on page 14 shows how to create a "Wild Indian." We looked at how to make a pig, a swan, a sheep; then we came to the "Wild Indian." "Should we learn how to make this hand shadow?" I asked. Everyone said, "No!" "Why not?" "Because Indian people aren't wild," a child said indignantly.

Next I held up *Will I Have a Friend?* by Miriam Cohen. The story takes place in a kindergarten or first grade, and on one page we see a child running around with a feather and headband on his head. On another page he is waving a tomahawk. "What about this book?" I asked. "This book is no good," a girl replied. "Remember when those Indian dancers came to our school? Charles made a war whoop and one of the dancers said that was making fun of Indians." "It makes you think that Indians just run around with tomahawks and make funny noises," said another student.

Next we looked at *The Matchlock Gun* by Walter D. Edmonds, a Newbery Award winner in 1941. I summarized the story: A Dutch family moves to Albany, New York, in 1757. Father goes off with the militia to fight the "Indians," leaving his wife at home with their son and daughter. We looked at pictures of the mother and children. A two-page spread in the middle of the book shows them peacefully gazing into a valley and at the mountains beyond. Other pictures show the mother kissing her children goodnight, talking to her son, and the baby sitting happily on the edge of a bed.

The mother is very worried about an attack by Native Americans. One day she goes out to the garden, and suddenly she sees them. I read aloud the description in the book:

> There were five of them, dark shapes on the road, coming from the brick house. They hardly looked like men, the way they moved. They were trotting, stooped over, first one and then another coming up, like dogs sifting up to the scent of food. Gertrude felt her heart pound hard; then it seemed to stop altogether. (p. 39)

"How does that sound to you?" I asked. "It sounds like the Indians are animals, like dogs" said one child. "Now look at these two pictures," I said. One showed the mother running away from the "Indians" who are holding tomahawks or knives and wearing scanty clothing, with two or three feathers in their hair. A two-page spread in flaming red shows three of the Native men close to the cabin, one having just thrown his tomahawk into the door close to the mother's head. Her son has just fired the matchlock gun and the three Native Americans are dying.

"What do you think of these illustrations?" I asked. "The Indians look scary, naked, wild, evil, mean," the children exclaimed.

"How do the settlers appear by comparison?" I asked. "They look peaceful," a student volunteered. "It makes you feel sorry for them and angry at the Indians, as if this family is just fighting back to protect their home."

"That's not right," a voice cried from the back of the group. "The Indians had a right to be mad. Those Dutch people took their land so they started the trouble in the first place. This book makes you just be mad at the Indians."

"That book doesn't say the names of the Indians!" "It makes you think Indians are crazy people!" "This book doesn't say that the Dutch took the Indians' land!" All of these comments poured forth from my students. They were angry.

On another day I gave the children the following passage to comment on from *Tomahawks and Trouble* by William O'Steele:

> Laird's fingers tightened on his rifle. It was hard to believe there could be varmints as mean as Indians in this world. He'd heard folks say the only good Indian was a dead Indian, and he believed it. (pp. 16-17)

Jackie, one of my students, wrote:

> It does not sound right to me at all because he is calling a Indian a animal but a Indian is not a animal. It was not fair for him to say that the only good Indian was a dead Indian and he should not believed that but he should believe this that the only good Indian is a good Indian.

In a later lesson, I told the children that not all Native Americans are portrayed fighting with settlers. An example of another type of book is *Red Fox and His Canoe* by Robert Benchley. I read the first page aloud: "Like all Indian boys, Red Fox had a canoe to go fishing in. But he wanted a bigger one."

Noel said: "What about the Navajo and the Hopi Indians? They lived in the desert in dry places. How could every boy have a canoe?"

We discussed why authors and illustrators might make mistakes in their depiction of Native Americans. The children concluded, "They are not Indians." "They read books when they were small that did not tell the truth about Indians."

I read the rest of *Red Fox and His Canoe* to the class and the children criticized various sections.

We discussed what could be done about the offensive images of Native Americans in the books we had reviewed and decided that sending our criticisms to the authors or publishers might help prevent future mistakes. Garrick and Calvin decided to write to Mr. Benchley and Joy began writing to Arnold Lobel, the illustrator.

The children were very excited to receive answers to the letters they had written. Joy read her answer from Mr. Lobel to the class. He wrote that he "did not try to make [Red Fox] into a really accurate depiction" and that the book is a "humorous fanciful story." "I think he's making excuses" she said. "Why?" I asked. "Because if he said that he made a mistake, then people wouldn't buy the book."

Mr. Benchley wrote that the story was a fable. Some children thought if the story was a fable, maybe it was all right not to portray Native American life faithfully. Others felt that children might believe everything the author wrote because he didn't say in the front of the book that it was a fable.

When Thanksgiving came, we discussed the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag

Red Fox and His Canoe by Benchley

Dear Editor,

I read your book. It made the Indians look like dogs. Those people talked the way we do and you do but in their language. . . . When they wanted to give something, the book did not tell about what language they spoke. It just said they spoke Indian.

Sincerely,
Scott Dames

Dear Editor,

In The Cruise of Christopher Columbus, why are you making fun of Indians? In the book the Indians all had the same faces, and they all had their legs high up in the air. If you were an Indian and they made fun of you I don't think you would like it. . . . Another thing is that the book shows that the houses they lived in were made out of wood and large leaves. So try to make the story more better next time.

Sincerilly yours,
Bernadette Smith

Dear Editor,

I don't like your book called The Cruise of Mr. Christopher Columbus. I didn't like it because you said things about Indians that weren't true. . . . Another thing I didn't like was on page 69, it says that Christopher Columbus invited the Indians to Spain, but what really happened was that he stole them!

censearly, Raymond
Miranda

Dear Editor,

I don't like the way the book says the grown-up Indians are skipping to the beach. Only kids skip. The Indians do the same thing at the same time. I don't like the way the Indians smeared themselves with paint. When they put on paint, they do it carefully on their face.

Your enemy,
Steven Rivera

people who met them. I read from *The First Thanksgiving* by Lou Rogers:

> When fall came, things were better. The Pilgrims had homes. They had all the food they could eat. . . .
>
> Governor Bradford said, "God has been good to us. We have homes, and we have food. We can go to our own church. We should thank God for all these things." (p. 22)

As I finished reading, a hand was waving in the air. "What about the Wampanoag Indians? Why don't they thank them? The Pilgrims would all be dead if they didn't show them how to plant food and how to hunt."

In addition to reviewing this "holiday" book, I thought it was also important to expose the children to a Native American perspective on the holiday itself. As a departure from the traditional (patronizing) displays featured in many schools at Thanksgiving time, I posted a sign (another *Akwesasne* resource) saying that many Native Americans regard Thanksgiving as a day of mourning and telling why. I also pointed out to the children that the holiday is not cited on the *Akwesasne* Calendar.

Around the time of Columbus Day, we reviewed *The Cruise of Mr. Christopher Columbus* by Sadyebeth and Anson Lowitz. From an out-loud reading, the children detected many stereotypes and distortions. Thirteen children volunteered to write letters to an editor at Scholastic Magazines, Inc. (see excerpts from their letters in the adjoining box).

We all waited and soon received an answer from Mary Ann Leeb. She agreed with the criticisms and informed us that Scholastic would no longer carry the book!

One day soon after, I saw Omar painstakingly writing for a long period of time at his desk. It was a free period after lunch and all the other children were drawing or playing games. He was writing a letter to Richard Scarry criticizing his *Best Word Book Ever:*

> Dear Richard Scarry,
> I did not like when you drew the Indians like a bear. Indians do not look like a bear and Indians do not put feathers on the heads, only on special occasions. I think you can make a better book than *Best Word Book Ever.*
>
> Sincerely,
> Omar Sanchez

Standing up in their canoes, they would shout, "Chug! Chug! Chug!"
This was Indian for, "Take! Take! Take!"
The Cruise of Mr. Christopher Columbus by Sadybeth and Lowitz

Native Americans:

What Not to Teach

by June Sark Heinrich

June Sark Heinrich recently directed an alternative school for Native American children in Chicago. Her experiences there revealed many inadequacies in the way teachers present the history and heritage of Native peoples in the classroom. She offers the following pointers to aid elementary school teachers in correcting the most common errors made in presenting Native American subject matter.

10 classroom "don'ts"

Don't use alphabet cards that say A is for apple, B is for ball, and I is for Indian.

The matter may *seem* to be a trivial one, but if you want your students to develop respect for Native Americans, don't start them out in kindergarten equating Indians with *things* like apples and balls. Other short "i" words (imp, ink or infant) could be used, so stay away from I-is-for-Indian in your alphabet teaching.

Don't talk about Indians as though they belong to the past.

Books and filmstrips often have titles like "How the Indians Lived," as though there aren't any living today. The fact is that about 800,000 Native Americans live in what is now the United States, many on reservations and many in cities and towns. They are in all kinds of neighborhoods and schools and are in all walks of life. Too many Native Americans live in conditions of poverty and powerlessness, but they are very much a part of the modern world. If the people who write books and filmstrips mean "How (particular groups of) Native Americans Lived Long Ago," then they should say so.

Don't talk about "them" and "us."

A "them" and "us" approach reflects extreme insensitivity, as well as a misconception of historical facts. "They" are more truly "us" than anyone else. Native peoples are the original Americans and are the only indigenous Americans in the sense that all of their ancestors were born on this land. Everybody else in this country came from some other place originally.

Don't lump all Native Americans together.

There were no "Indians" before the Europeans came to America—that is, no peoples called themselves "Indians." They are Navajo or Seminole or Menominee, etc. The hundreds of Native groups scattered throughout the U.S. are separate peoples, separate nations. They have separate languages and cultures and names. Native Americans of one nation were and are as different from Native Americans of another nation as Italians are from Swedes, Hungarians from the Irish or the English from the Spanish. When referring to and teaching about Native Americans, use the word "Indian"—or even "Native American"—as little as possible. Don't "study the Indians." Study the Hopi, the Sioux, the Nisqually or the Apache.

Don't expect Native Americans to look like Hollywood movie "Indians."

Some Native Americans tell a story about a white "American" woman who visited a reservation. She stopped and stared at a young man, then said to him, "are you a *real* Indian? You don't look Indian."

Whatever it is that people expect Native Americans to look like, many do not fit those images. Since they come from different nations, their physical features, body structure and skin colors vary a great deal and none has red skin. Of course, Native and non-Native Americans have intermarried so that many Native Americans today have European, African or other ancestry. Therefore, don't expect all Native Americans to look alike, any more than all Europeans look alike.

Don't let TV stereotypes go unchallenged.

Unfortunately for both Native and non-Native American children, TV programs still show the savage warrior or occasionally the noble savage stereotypes. Discuss with children the TV programs they watch. Help them understand the meaning of the word "stereotype." Help them understand that, from the Native American point of view, Columbus and other Europeans who came to this land were invaders. Even so, Native Americans originally welcomed and helped the European settlers. When they fought, they were no more "savage" than the Europeans and were often less so. Help children understand that atrocities are a part of *any* war. In fact, war itself is atrocious. At least, the Native Americans were defending land they had lived on for thousands

of years. If Native Americans were not "savage warriors," neither were they "noble savages." They were no more nor less noble than the rest of humanity.

Another common stereotype is the portrayal of the "Indian" as a person of few words, mostly "ugh." The fact is that early European settlers were aware of and commented specifically on the brilliance of Native American oratory and the beauty of their languages.

Stereotypes are sneaky. They influence the way we talk and live and play, sometimes without our knowing it. Don't say to your students, "You act like a bunch of wild Indians." Don't encourage or even allow children to play "cowboys and Indians." Be sensitive to stereotypes in everything you say and do.

Don't let students get the impression that a few "brave" Europeans defeated millions of "Indian savages" in battle.

How could a few Europeans take away the land of Native Americans and kill off millions of them? This did not all happen in battle. Historians tell us that, considering the number of people involved in the "Indian" wars, the number actually killed on both sides was small. What really defeated Native Americans were the diseases brought to this continent by the Europeans. Since Native Americans had never been exposed to smallpox, measles, tuberculosis, syphilis and other diseases that plagued the Old World, they had no immunity and were thus ravaged. Between 1492 and 1910, the Native population in the U.S. area declined to about 200,000. Help your students understand that it was germs and disease, not Europeans' "superior" brains and bravery, that defeated the Native peoples.

Don't teach that Native Americans are just like other ethnic and racial minorities.

Ethnic and racial minorities in the U.S. share in common discrimination, unemployment, poverty, poor education, etc. But they are *not* all alike. The problems these groups encounter are not all the same, nor are their solutions. Perhaps the biggest difference between Native Americans and other U.S. minorities is that Native peoples didn't come from some other land. This land has always been their home.

Although dispossessed of most of their land, Native peoples didn't lose all of it. According to U.S. law, Native American reservations are nations within the United States. U.S. government and business interests persist in trying to take away Native land—especially land containing oil or other valuable resources. However, the fact is that Native Americans—by treaty rights—own their own lands. No other minority within the United States is in a similar legal position. Native peoples view themselves as separate nations within a nation. And though often ignored and/or violated, U.S. laws and treaties, officially endorsed by U.S. presidents and the Congress, attest to those claims.

The attractive full-color poster above calls for support of a Mohawk settlement in upstate New York—the Ganienkeh Territory—reclaimed by Native Americans three years ago based on a long-standing treaty.

Don't assume that Native American children are well acquainted with their heritage.

If you have Native American children in your class, you may expect that they will be good resource persons for your "unit on Indians." Today, it is not unlikely that such children will be proud of being Native American. Some may participate in traditional activities of their cultures. In general, however, Native children have much in common with other children in the U.S. in that they know far more about TV programs than about their own national ways of life. They eat junk food and want all of the things most children in our society want. If lost in a forest, they would not necessarily be able to manage any better than other children would. Like other children in the U.S., Native children need to be taught about the Native heritage which, in a very real sense, is the heritage of everybody living in the U.S. today.

Don't let students think that Native ways of life have no meaning today.

Native arts have long commanded worldwide interest and admiration. But far more important for human and ecological survival are Native American philosophies of life. Respect for the land; love of every form of life, human and non-human; harmony between humans and nature rather than conquest and destruction of nature—these are vital characteristics of Native ways of life. All peoples in the U.S. can and must learn to live in harmony with the natural world and with one another. That is one lesson Native peoples can teach the world, and that is one of the most significant lessons you should teach your students about "the Indians."

Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes: Filmstrip script and discussion pointers

Before showing the filmstrip, there are only three simple things to do.

1. Explain to the children that—before Columbus arrived—there were hundreds of different Native nations on this continent. Each had its own language, clothing, customs and territory. The people never called themselves "Indians," but each had a national name. The nationalities of the children in this filmstrip are Pawnee, Osage, Shinnecock, Choctaw, Lenni Lenape and Mohawk. (You might write these names on the board and pronounce them for the class.) Other nations mentioned in the filmstrip are Sioux, Seneca, Apache, Taos, Wichita, Mandan and Ojibway.

2. Explain that a "treaty" is a promise made by two or more nations and signed by their leaders. The United States signed 371 treaties with various Native nations.

3. Explain that when Indian nations made treaties with the United States, they gave parts of their lands to the U.S. and kept—or reserved—the rest for themselves. Even though a lot of this land has since been taken from them, the lands that remain are called "reservations."

1 This is the stupidest book!

2 Look! This one's even dumber!

3 They make me mad.

4 The people who make these books don't know *any*thing about Indian people!

5 THE COUNCIL ON INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

6 WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN THE NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION PROGRAM, TITLE IV, NEW YORK CITY—

7 AND THE DIVISION FOR LIFE AND MISSION OF THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

8 PRESENTS—UNLEARNING "INDIAN" STEREOTYPES

9 My name is Mona. My mother's Pawnee and my father's Osage.

10 The Osage and Pawnee are two of the Indian nations that were in this country way before white people came.

11 And my name is Danny. I'm Shinnecock.

12 I first met Mona here, in New York City . . .

13 Where we both come to a special program for Indian kids.

14 The kids in this program are from *thirty* different Indian nations.

15 I live in an apartment house where no pets are allowed.

16 So every summer I visit my grandmother on the reservation in Long Island.

17 Once, the Shinnecock people had a whole big part of Long Island for their country. But white people took most of it.

18 Now we only have a little piece called the Shinnecock Indian re-ser-va-tion.

19 The red places on the map show all the reservations in the United States. They are the *only* pieces of land left for Indian nations.

20 Danny and I come here to learn about Indian history and languages.

21 And to spend time with other Native American children and teachers.

22 This is Muriel. Her father's family are Indians from Central America.

23 Muriel's father teaches us about Native music, and how to make Indian style clothes and things.

24 Stephanie and her brother Louis are Lenni Lenape.

25 And Josh, here, is Choctaw.

26 Long ago, the Choctaw people lived in the South, where Mississippi and Louisiana are today.

27 Then Andrew Jackson—he was President of the United States—sent soldiers to make the Choctaw people leave their homes and farms.

28 Because white people wanted all the land for themselves!

29 The Choctaw—and other Native people—had to leave their own lands and go all the way to Oklahoma. Lots *died* on the way.

30 The United States promised that Indian people could have the land in Oklahoma for ever and ever.

31 But when white people found valuable oil there, they broke their promise and took most of Oklahoma away, too.

32 Here's Josh showing the small part of Oklahoma that still belongs to the Choctaw people.

33 Lance is Mohawk. Last year he lived on the Mohawk reservation.

34 Part of their reservation is in Canada and part is in the United States.

35 When Lance showed us pictures of his reservation, we were sad.

36 Near the reservation is this big factory. The owners make lots of money, but they let the factory pollute the river and the earth.

37 Because there's so much pollution, trees are dying and cows' teeth are rotting out.

38 Most of the fish in the river died, and those still there are full of poison and no good to eat.

39 The Mohawk people think it's wrong to spoil land and water.

40 They want to get back more of their old land so they can live like their grandparents taught them.

41 That means respecting the earth, the waters and all living things, not killing them with poison.

42 And sharing all the work, the food and the land with each other.

43 Our teachers here, like Daphne, talk to us about all these things.

44 We talk about history, school and things that are happening in the world.

45 Well, one day Danny brought in a dumb book someone gave his cousin.

46 It was an A B C book, and it had "I is for Indian."

47 That made us all mad. Like books don't say "I is for Italian."

48 No! They say "I is for igloos, insects, inkwells and Indians."

49 Like Indians are *things*, instead of real people.

50 Then our teacher walked us over to a big children's library.

51 Where we found lots more books with dopey pictures of Indians.

52 And with other kids—and even animals—playing like they was Indians.

53 And with pictures of people wearing feathers . . .

54 Whooping and jumping . . .

55 Or sneaking around.

56 No wonder other kids don't believe we're *really* Indians, when we tell them.

57 Yeah! They expect us to run around dressed like these crazy pictures.

58 And saying, "How!" and "Ugh!" But Indian people don't do *that*!

59 Daphne says all that stuff was just *made up* by people who make silly cowboy and Indian movies.

60 And make untrue books, like these.

61 Right! Cause Indian people *never looked* like this!

62 And today, most of us *never* dress like this, or wear feathers . . .

63 Except, some of us do—for special times like ceremonies.

64 But *kids never* used to wear headdresses, only grown ups.

65 And *they* had to do special good things for their people before they *earned* the right to wear them.

66 Each eagle feather and each decoration stood for some special thing they did.

67 So our teacher says it's a "s-t-e-r-e-o-type" when TV and books show Indians *always* wearing feathers.

68 Or *always* wearing this *same kind* of headdress. Cause only *some* nations, like the Sioux, wore headdresses like that.

69 There were hundreds of Indian nations and many kinds of headdress. This one is Seneca.

70 This is Apache.

71 And this is Pawnee. There are lots more.

72 Muriel noticed that the books keep showing tipis, like that's the *only* kind of house Indians ever lived in.

73 People who *did* live in tipis had special decorations on them—to tell about things that happened.

74 But tipis were only used by Indian people in the western prairies. Other Native nations had different houses.

75 Like Lance's great grandparents, and all the Mohawk, used to live in longhouses.

76 This is a Wichita grass house. They were hard to make, but they kept out the wind and rain.

77 The Navajo people used to live in houses called hogans. Some still live in them today.

78 The Taos people lived in pueblos—the first apartment houses.

79 But today, most Native people live in houses like everyone else lives in.

80 Stephanie didn't like how the books call Indian babies, "Papoose."

81 Indian babies should just be called "babies."

82 Just like Native American women should be called "women"—not a nasty world like "*squaw*."

83 Josh says it's *crazy* for books to talk about "Indian princesses."

84 Because Native people didn't have kings, or princesses, like Europeans did.

85 No. Cause everyone decided *together* who the leaders would be. They had to be good hunters . . .

86 Or very brave—or very wise.

87 If they *stopped* being good leaders, we just picked different leaders.

88 Some were women leaders, just like some are today.

89 Look! This book says "Fierce Indians fought cowboys in great desert spaces."

90 Lots of movies and books say Indians were *mean*—always fighting and scalping.

91 They never tell how white men paid lots of money to other whites, if they murdered Indian people and brought in their scalps.

92 They wanted lots of Indian people killed so they could take away our land.

93 *That's* why we fought against the pioneers.

94 Yeah! *Anyone's* got a right to keep their country from being stolen!

95 Some of these books make believe that all Indians look the same. And . . .

96 Who ever saw a real Indian person with *red* skin!

97 Lots of books show *animals* with feathers. And with dopey names.

98 They're really making fun of us—*and that's not fair!*

99 No wonder some kids laugh, or say nasty things, when they find out we're Indians.

100 Our teacher says it's not their fault, though, cause books and movies tell lies about Native people.

101 Look! More mean looking animals supposed to be Indians.

102 And making fun of our pipes! Some pipes were just for smoking, but . . .

103 Other pipes are sacred, and part of our religion. A sacred pipe . . .

104 Keeps our people together and strong. *We* don't poke fun at other people's religions!

105 This book makes fun of our dancing!

106 When we dance, we don't just jump around.

107 We learn special steps for special dances. And it's *hard* to learn them right.

108 Our dances have meanings, and some are part of our religion, too.

109 Louis is the best contest dancer, when we go to powwows.

110 Powwows are a time to meet and talk, dance and be together.

111 And to remember important things our grandparents taught us. That's called remembering our tra-di-tions.

112 Sometimes at powwows we talk about our treaties.

113 Treaties are promises between Native nations and the United States.

114 Like Indians gave the United States *some* land—and the United States *promised not* to take any more.

115 But the United States always broke its promises, and keeps taking more land.

116 Today, big coal companies are digging up and spoiling reservation land to make a lot of money selling the coal.

117 And some white people are trying to take away Indians' right to fish, like the treaties promised we could.

118 Native people are working hard to get the United States to keep the treaty promises it made. That's what this sign means.

119 Sometimes I wonder how things would be if Indians had just *let* all those Pilgrims starve to death.

120 Instead, we taught them how to grow food and live here. Then they went and took our lands away!

121 That's why a lot of us *won't celebrate* on Thanksgiving Day.

122 Or on Columbus Day. Columbus made Indian people into slaves. And his men killed lots of our people.

123 Danny, do you remember when that Ojibway teacher flew to Italy—where Columbus came from?

124 Sure! He got off the plane and said, "I discover and claim this land in the name of American Indians!"

125 Yeah. He did that to show how crazy it is for books to say Columbus *discovered* America.

126 How can you discover a land where millions of people were already living?

127 Well, I hope other kids won't believe what they read about us in these books.

128 I hope they learn about our real lives, our real history and our real beliefs.

129 And about what Native people are doing today to try to make a better life.□

Filmstrip Discussion Pointers

ABOUT THE FILMSTRIP

The children in the filmstrip all participate in the Native American Education Program, a Title IV funded program of the New York City Board of Education. Their names and nationalities are all as indicated in the filmstrip script.

The script was written by staff of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, based on audio tapes made while the children were discussing the books with their teachers. The staff of the Native American Education Program made important corrections and additions to the script.

ABOUT THE CHILDREN

Should children viewing the filmstrip question the appearance of some of the children—saying that, "They don't look like Indians"—you might counter with, "Well, what does an Indian look like?" You can explain that when the Europeans first arrived on these shores there were hundreds of Native nations having a wide range of difference in skin color, features, hair, physical structure and so forth. There *never* was any single physical description which fit *all* Native peoples. During the last few hundred years there has been much intermarriage of Native and non-Native peoples. Naturally, this results in still greater variety of appearance.

ABOUT THE USE OF "NATION," NOT "TRIBE"

The word "nation" is used instead of "tribe" in the filmstrip. Indian nations were separate, independent nations with their own lands, cultures and governments at the time European colonization began. The United States recognized their nationhood by signing hundreds of formal treaties with them. As Chief Justice John Marshall wrote in a still standing 1832 case:

> The very term "nation," so generally applied to them, means "a people distinct from others." The constitution, by declaring treaties already made, as well as those to be made, to be the supreme law of the land, has adopted and sanctioned the previous treaties with the Indian nations, and, consequently, admits their rank among those powers who are capable of making treaties. The words "treaty" and "nation" are words of our own language, selected in our diplomatic and legislative proceedings, by ourselves, having each a definite and well understood meaning. We have applied them to Indians as we have applied them to the other nations of the earth. They are applied to all in the same sense.

And the leading struggle of Native American nations today is recognition of their treaty rights, independence and right to self-determination.

ABOUT STRIP-MINING, WATER RIGHTS, FISHING RIGHTS

Two of the gravest issues facing Indian nations in the western part of the United States are strip-mining and water rights. The western states contain enormous amounts of coal and over a third of this is on Indian reservations. The Northern Cheyenne and the Crow reservations sit atop the Fort Union Coal Formation, the largest concentration of coal in the country. The Navajo and Hopi reservations also contain enormous reserves of coal, as well as uranium, natural gas and oil. The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs has negotiated contracts with multinational corporations, allowing them to strip-mine the reservations, pay the Native nations meager royalties and gain large profits.

Because the land in the West is arid, strip-mining destroys it, exposing acids and chemicals that kill all plant life and poison the water, so that the land cannot be reclaimed. In addition to strip-mining, the corporations and the government are also building huge power plants and coal gasification plants on the reservations, to produce energy for distant urban areas. This produces pollution that fills the air and settles on the land, further destroying the reservations' environment.

The coal gasification process requires huge quantities of water, and in many instances the power plants and gasification plants receive their coal via slurry lines, which also use great amounts of water to transport the coal from the strip-mine areas. This water is being pumped out of the underground water tables of the reservations, or being taken from the few rivers that provide critically important water to the reservations and the western states for farming. The U.S. Supreme Court, in the 1908 Winters decision, stated a basic right of Indian nations—that in signing treaties with the U.S., Indian nations ceded land in exchange for certain promises. The Court stated that inherent in the process of ceding lands, Native nations reserved the right to a water supply for their people, their agriculture and their economies. The Court ruled—and this ruling has been consistently reaffirmed—that Indian nations have "aboriginal" rights that guarantee them first use of water to meet their needs.

However, government agencies have ignored this principle and have continued to take Native water, or have allowed states and localities to do so. And without water, the economies of the reservations are destroyed. (Ironically, it was Native people of the Southwest who, centuries before the coming of Europeans, had developed irrigation as a means of conserving water, farming arid lands and providing for their people.)

So, to meet the U.S. over-consumption of energy, Indian lands are strip-mined, their water consumed, their air polluted and their land destroyed—all to provide energy for far-off cities that don't want the pollution that is part of the process of creating energy.

In signing treaties to cede lands to the U.S., a primary concern of many Native nations was to assure their fishing rights. That issue is particularly important in the Northwest where salmon and other fish have always been important diet staples and a major trade item.

As non-Native settlers and industrial development increased, so did the threat to Indian fishing rights. In 1913, a total of 39,626,690 salmon were caught in Puget Sound. By 1969, only 3,180,165 salmon were caught, the result of unsound practices of the non-Indian commercial fishing industry and of industrial pollution.

In 1974, a federal court upheld the primary fishing rights of Native peoples to the declining fish catch, and thus reaffirmed the treaty rights of the Lummi, Muckleshoot, Nisqually, Puyallup, Stillaguamish, Suquamish, Upper Skagit, and Yakima people, among others. As happened after other court decisions affirming Native rights, a bill was introduced in Congress, in 1977, to abrogate the treaties. The bill is supported by powerful non-Indian commercial and sports fishing groups.

A Thanksgiving Message We Could Do Without

Indians...	We...
lived in houses of grass and bark	live in houses of brick and wood
cooked on a fire	use a stove
slept in deerskin	sleep in beds
dried out meat	keep meat in refrigerators
picked and killed their own food	buy our food from a grocery
made fires with sticks	use matches
used bow and arrows	use guns and sometimes bow and arrows

FOOD

Indians Ate	We Eat
Indian corn	pork
cranberries	beef
corn meal mush	sweet corn
deer	oatmeal
rabbit	turkey
turkey	chicken
beans	apples
blackberries	pineapples
strawberries	milk
water	orange juice
	beer

CLOTHES

Indians Wore	We Wear
headbands and feathers	hats
deerskin shirts	cloth shirts with collars
deerskin blankets and furs	coats and sweaters
leggins	pants
deerskin dresses and skirts	cloth skirts and dresses
moccasins	shoes, sneakers, boots, socks

The above was copied from a chart hanging in an elementary school corridor in Amherst, Mass. It is an example of the type of information presented to children across the country at Thanksgiving time. Note the objectionable elements in this material: The distinction between "Indians" and "we"; the implication that "Indians" are an extinct people (frequent use of the past tense when discussing "Indians" supports the "Vanished Indian" myth, denying both the present existence of Native Americans and the continuity of their culture); the over-simplification of Native cultures and the generalization of certain characteristics to apply to all "Indians"; the ethnocentric Western focus on material objects and artifacts rather than on the important values of Native cultures, such as their concept of harmony between material and non-material aspects of life and their respect for the relationship between all aspects of Mother Earth.

Headdresses Used by Some Native Americans

Most of the time, we see the same kind of headdress worn by Indian men. Usually these are the Plains Indian war bonnets, which should not be worn except by a person who has been honored with this privilege.

But there are many headdresses worn traditionally by Native nations that are extraordinarily beautiful. We show here just a few of them. Notice how they vary in shape, design and style.

A Sioux war bonnet.

A buffalo horn war bonnet. The cap is made of fur, covered with tiny down feathers. A sinew cord is tied to the tips of the horns. This holds the feathers, shown in the center, straight up.

A Blackfeet headdress.

An eastern tribal roach. Can be worn with one or two eagle feathers. Usually tied under the chin.

An Iroquois headdress.

A Mandan headdress. It is made of tail feathers and curled breast feathers from large birds.

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